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FINAL RECORD OF THE SIX HUNDRED AND FORTY-FOURTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 25 February 1993, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. Radoslav Deyanov (Bulgaria)

The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 644th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

At the beginning, I wish to warmly welcome, on behalf of the Conference and on my own behalf, His Excellency the Secretary-General of the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Wolfgang Schallenberg, who is inscribed as first speaker at this plenary meeting. Ambassador Schallenberg is a distinguished career diplomat who has already occupied other positions of responsibility and was involved at a certain stage in our efforts to ban chemical weapons. I wish to note the important contributions made by Austria, a non-member State, to the work of the Conference on a number of substantive issues. Its delegation to the Conference has been very active and has provided a valuable contribution to the forum in this Conference and other participants in the work of this body.

I have on my list of speakers today the representatives of Austria, the Netherlands and Spain. I now give the floor to His Excellency the Secretary-General of the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Wolfgang Schallenberg.

Mr. SCHALLENBERG (Austria)(translated from French): Mr. President, thank you for your kind words. Allow me first of all to tell you how happy we are to see you in the Chair. At the same time I should like to congratulate Ambassador Amorim, whose close links with Vienna we are well aware of, on ensuring a good start to the work of the Conference in such an outstanding manner. Similarly, I should like to pay tribute to the excellent work done by the secretariat of the Conference, and notably by Ambassador Berasategui. Lastly, I would not wish to fail to mention that Mr. Bensmail's efforts are well known and appreciated in the Austrian capital.

The report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations entitled "New dimensions of arms regulation and disarmament in the post-cold-war era" is a timely document which reflects very appropriately the new facts and issues in this field at this time. A more detailed commentary on the report in its entirety has been submitted to the United Nations Secretariat, and we plan to outline its main thrust during the session of the First Committee which is to be held in just two weeks' time in New York. My statement today will be devoted to three of the subjects that are mentioned therein: the relationship between regional and global disarmament; the nuclear threat; and the new disarmament machinery.

With respect to the relationship between the regional and global approach in disarmament, we fully endorse the view of the Secretary-General that "regional and subregional organizations can further the globalization of disarmament, both in cooperation with each other and with the United Nations". In keeping with General Assembly resolution 47/52 J of 9 December 1992, we also consider that a close link between regional disarmament and the Conference on Disarmament would be beneficial for the solution of the entire range of disarmament issues. The Conference could provide specific knowledge to States participating in regional disarmament efforts and it could also benefit in return from the experience thus acquired. Thus, the disarmament order enshrined by the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe and the Helsinki agreements of 10 July 1992 providing for a great variety of monitoring machinery can certainly be considered as a source of inspiration, if not a model, for many other regions of the world.

To introduce the second subject of my statement, that is to say the nuclear threat, I should like first and foremost to announce that Austria welcomes the re-establishment of an ad hoc committee on a nuclear test ban. Indeed, we greatly hope that this committee will successfully conclude the substantive work which it has begun in accordance with its mandate. We would welcome the conclusion of this work as soon as possible. Negotiations on a treaty for a comprehensive nuclear test ban could thus begin without delay. At this stage I should like to recall that on 5 June last, the Chamber of Deputies of the Austrian parliament, the Nationalrat, the National Council, called for an immediate halt to all nuclear tests even before an international obligation is established to this end. The Deputies also requested the Austrian Government to continue its policy of rejecting all nuclear tests, given that the latter constitute an enormous danger for the environmental health and balance of the world as a whole. They also encouraged our Government to support relevant proposals to reduce nuclear arsenals and promote the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

We therefore took note with satisfaction of the START II agreement signed on 3 January last between the Presidents of the United States of America and the Russian Federation, which provides for a substantial reduction of the nuclear arsenals of these two countries. However, we must also express our profound concern that the conditions for the entry into force of the two START treaties have not yet been met. In this context, Austria urges the States which, like Ukraine, belonged to the former Soviet Union and possess nuclear weapons on their territory, to take the necessary measures to ratify the NPT as soon as possible, in accordance with the commitments made in Lisbon on 23 May 1992 by Byelorussia, the United States of America, Kazakhstan, Russia and Ukraine.

The Chamber of Deputies of our parliament also requested the Austrian Government to examine the international proposals designed to reduce nuclear arsenals, and to support them whenever they are consistent with Austrian interests. It is therefore our intention to review closely matters related, *inter alia*, to the relationship between nuclear deterrence and disarmament, on the one hand, and between nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons on the other. Of course, during this review we will take account of political realities as well as the genuine degree of adherence to the NPT, both from the quantitative and from the qualitative standpoints. Thus we will note that the *pax atomica* which prevailed during the cold war by dint of the maintenance of the nuclear balance between the two super-Powers has now been called into question. This is so in particular as, since the disappearance of the Soviet nuclear pillar, the nuclear arsenal has become a bargaining chip between some of the former Soviet republics. The *pax atomica* has also been

(Mr. Schallenberg, Austria)

called into question because some States still do not wish to subscribe to the NPT. Moreover, in the wake of the Gulf war, on-site inspections conducted in Iraq, which has signed the NPT, have revealed the shortcomings of this treaty, shortcomings which must be remedied.

Thus it is no doubt the fear of extensive and rapid nuclear proliferation which has recently underscored the discriminatory nature of the NPT. It is because of concern over horizontal and global nuclear proliferation that Austria will fully support the efforts made within the International Atomic Energy Agency to strengthen its system of safeguards. We view such a strengthening as essential if we are to restore confidence in the proper functioning of this system. Moreover, we consider that these efforts will enable IAEA in the future not only to fully discharge its duty to implement the safeguards throughout the world, but also to enhance its ability to play a still more important role in this field.

In the run-up to the NPT review and extension conference in 1995, the moratoriums on nuclear tests augur well. I should like to recall in this context that since acceding to the NPT in 1969, Austria has always firmly supported it in all its aspects. It has actively participated in the periodic review conferences. Between now and the 1995 review and extension conference, Austria will continue to work for the indefinite extension of the NPT and will endeavour to promote the universal nature of this instrument, whose importance is paramount for international security. We are also encouraged to note that the NPT has 16 additional parties since the fourth review conference in 1990, and that all the nuclear-weapon States are now party to it, at least as defined by the treaty itself. We think this is all the more important as the management of nuclear power, together with management of the environment, represents the major challenge for the survival of mankind.

The third and last subject of my statement will be devoted to the new disarmament machinery which has already been the subject of the great majority of statements delivered before this Conference since the beginning of this year. What is more, we think that the designation of Ambassadors Marín Bosch of Mexico and O'Sullivan of Australia as coordinators for the questions of the agenda and the expansion of the CD has clearly demonstrated the importance which the Conference on Disarmament attaches to these subjects.

In view of the fact that the danger of a proliferation of regional conflicts triggered by a variety of political, economic and cultural factors has now become more threatening than in the past, we consider that expansion of the CD is inevitable. Without it, the CD would not be able to reflect the fact that the world has radically changed and that it has become a multi-polar world. And if the CD no longer reflected the state of the world, there would be a risk that its decisions would no longer bind those whose interests were not taken into account. As you know, the arguments in favour of a substantial expansion of the Conference are not advanced only by observer countries, but increasingly by the members of the Conference themselves. This trend shows clearly that the danger that the

Conference will become weakened as a result of an increase in the number of its members is less and less substantial. And yet the success of the negotiations on chemical weapons could have constituted a pretext for a more restrictive approach. But that was not the case.

Since 1979, when the non-member countries of the CD had an opportunity to participate in the work of the Conference for the first time, Austria has been granted observer status from year to year, and this began at a time when the number of States represented among the observers was very small. Since it is firmly resolved to contribute more actively to multilateral disarmament efforts, Austria made a formal application for admission back in 1982. Nevertheless, the application has not yet been taken up, even though the CD has regularly acknowledged that the issue of the expansion of the Conference called for an urgent decision. Austria sincerely hopes that the new phase of work on which the Conference is now embarking will also prove an appropriate time to act at last on our application for membership.

The active role played by Austria within the Conference on Disarmament is well known, both among the members and among the observers. We have pursued it in the shape of numerous statements, working papers and, in particular, the offer made at the time to host the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons in Vienna. There is also an additional reason for Austria to join the CD as a member: following the disappearance of the confrontation between the two military blocs in Europe, Austria has an increased need to maintain its security through active participation in the development of international treaties, notably in the disarmament field. This perception is borne out by the cruel war which is now being waged in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Austrian Government is of the view that countries which are ready and able to contribute significantly to multilateral disarmament measures should be accepted as equals by the members of the CD. We think that this would strengthen the potential of the Conference and, especially in the long term, would constitute an important factor to ensure the universal scope of the Conference's decisions.

The PRESIDENT: I thank His Excellency the Secretary-General of the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs for his important statement and for the kind words he addressed to me. I now give the floor to the representative of the Netherlands, Ambassador Wagenmakers.

Mr. WAGENMAKERS (Netherlands): Mr. President, I have asked for the floor to address the item of Transparency in armaments, and more specifically the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. Before doing so, I should like to wish you every success in presiding over the Conference. You can be assured of my delegation's full support in carrying out your responsibilities in this regard. Allow me also to express gratitude to our previous President, Ambassador Amorim of Brazil, who greatly facilitated an expeditious start of the Conference in 1993. I would also like to cordially welcome our distinguished guest of today, the Secretary-General of the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Wolfgang Schallenberg.

In 1991, the United Nations General Assembly decided with an overwhelming majority of votes to establish the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. By doing so, the United Nations took an important step forward in promoting greater openness and transparency in military matters. As a confidence-building measure, the value of the Register rests in its potential to foster a climate of mutual trust and restraint, leading to greater regional and international peace and security.

The United Nations Register of Conventional Arms was established on 1 January 1992. In order to ensure the effective operation of the Register, the Secretary-General of the United Nations brought together in 1992 a panel of governmental technical experts, on the basis of equitable geographical representation. The panel, which I had the honour to chair, elaborated the technical procedures for the Register. For instance, it developed a practical one-page standardized form for reporting international transfers of conventional weapons. In addition to the technical aspects, the panel looked into the modalities for early expansion of the Register and addressed the resource implications for the maintenance of the Register by the United Nations Secretary-General. The panel produced a consensus report (A/47/342), which was subsequently endorsed by the General Assembly, also by consensus.

With the Register having been established and the technical procedures in place, everything is set for the next crucial phase, that is inputs of data and information by United Nations Member States. In anticipation of and preparation for these national inputs, quite a bit of supportive activity is going on. I refer to regional workshops and symposiums undertaken or being undertaken in all five continents of our globe. As for Europe, the CSCE Forum for Security Cooperation is close to agreeing to exchange copies of national submissions to the United Nations Register among themselves. The target date for those submissions is quickly approaching. The first registration is to take place by 30 April 1993 in respect of the calendar year 1992. To be reported to the United Nations Secretary-General are data on imports and exports of seven categories of major equipment. For this purpose, Member States are to complete the standardized reporting form. If no imports or exports of any of the seven categories occurred in 1992, a so-called nil return will suffice. In addition to data on imports and exports of arms, Member States are invited to provide the Secretary-General with available background information regarding their military holdings, procurement through national production and relevant policies. The term "available" indicates that no special reports need to be prepared for submission to the Register. The background information referred to contains Government white papers, policy statements and the like. In fact, quite a few United Nations Member States, among them the Netherlands, have already submitted such information to the Secretary-General (A/47/370 and addenda).

The importance of participation in the Register by as many States as possible cannot be overstated. The Register can only be effective as a confidence-building measure if States are prepared to use it. The Netherlands Government strongly supports the United Nations Register and its objectives, and will submit its return by the required date of 30 April. It is the fervent hope of my Government that all those present here today, both members of the Conference and non-members participating in the work of the Conference, will do the same. I dare say that the Conference on Disarmament has a special responsibility in keeping up the momentum that has led to the establishment of the Register. We, the CD community, member States and Observer States, should give a positive example to the international community by participating in the Register ourselves and encouraging others to do likewise.

It goes without saying that my delegation welcomes the establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency in Armaments. It is a timely recognition of the relevance of this subject in the post-cold-war era. Furthermore, by establishing the Ad Hoc Committee, the Conference on Disarmament has given proof that it is capable of keeping in step with a changing international environment.

The Conference on Disarmament has been requested by the General Assembly to address a number of aspects of openness and transparency in armaments. One such request pertains to elaborating practical means to increase openness and transparency in areas such as military holdings and procurement of arms through national production. Another request has to do with increasing openness and transparency related to the transfer of high technology with military applications and to weapons of mass destruction, in accordance with existing legal instruments. The work of the Conference on Disarmament on these issues will be taken into account by the group of governmental experts to be convened by the United Nations Secretary-General in 1994 to prepare a report on the continuing operation of the Register and its further development. While it is the prerogative of the 1994 group of governmental experts to draw up specific conclusions and recommendations for the continuing operation and possible expansion of the Register, the Conference on Disarmament can usefully prepare the groundwork by providing the Group with substantive ideas. This requires, however, that the Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency in Armaments focus in 1993 on those areas where progress is possible.

In the view of my delegation, tangible progress can be made in 1993 with regard to the so-called interrelated aspects of the excessive and destabilizing accumulation of arms, including military holdings and procurement through national production. The General Assembly has requested the Conference to address this question as soon as possible and elaborate practical means to increase openness and transparency in this field. The Ad Hoc Committee should heed this request by giving priority attention to the discussion of this question. The urgency of the CD handling this matter, in an adequate and timely manner, stems from the fact that the United Nations Secretary-General will in all likelihood establish the 1994 group of governmental experts as early as January next, after which the Group is expected to begin its deliberations expeditiously. The expert group will have at its disposal *inter alia* the United Nations Secretary-General's consolidated report of national submissions on the calendar year 1992. Later on, in the course of 1994, the United Nations Secretary-General's consolidated report on the calendar year 1993 will also become available. Further guidance for the 1994 governmental expert group consists of views submitted by Member States on the operation of the Register and its further development.

The 1994 Group will review the Register, and its function in the transparency process, in both practical and conceptual terms. It is a fair guess that the Group will look into such matters as the level of participation in the Register; possible improvements to the standardized reporting form; definitional problems; possible modifications of the existing parameters of the seven categories of equipment; possible inclusion of new categories of equipment; and possible inclusion of data on military holdings and procurement through national production. It is evident that the 1994 governmental expert group could use a push from the CD in Geneva.

Things are moving, and they are moving fast. I wish strongly to underline the importance of the CD providing its contributions, adequately and on time. That means we should start our work in the Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency in Armaments without further delay.

As for weapons of mass destruction and transfers of high technology with military applications, previous discussions within the CD have indicated a considerable divergence of views as to how these issues relate to increased openness and transparency. On weapons of mass destruction, my Government holds the view that the existing legal instruments dealing with these types of weapons constitute, between them, a coherent interlocking network of provisions which are directly relevant to the question at hand. Taking these legal instruments as the basis, the Netherlands is of course willing to discuss practical means of increasing openness and transparency that would help to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons, other weapons of mass destruction, as well as their delivery systems. As to developing practical measures related to transfers of high technology with military applications, my delegation looks forward to continuing the exchange of views on these issues both in the CD Ad Hoc Committee and in the United Nations Disarmament Commission. Very interesting proposals have been put on the table.

Mr. President, in conclusion, allow me to address the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms one more time. As I stated earlier, the Register is about to enter its next crucial phase - inputs of data and information by Governments. It is of the utmost importance that States participate in the Register, right from the start. For only then can the Register develop into an essential building block in a family of efforts that will help to bring about a new political and security relationship between States, a relationship characterized by transparency, trust and partnership.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the Netherlands for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Spain, Ambassador Pérez-Villanueva.

Mr. PEREZ-VILLANUEVA (Spain)(translated from Spanish): Mr. President, at the beginning of my statement today I would like to congratulate you on taking up the presidency of the Conference and assure you of the confidence I myself and my delegation have that, firstly, you will be fully aware of the important moment in which the Conference finds itself as regards a number of vital aspects for its future and, on the other hand, my delegation's absolute conviction that you will discharge your functions in an outstanding manner. I would also like to express appreciation for the efforts and professional skills of your predecessor, the Ambassador of Brazil, and of course, since we know him well, to pay tribute to the same professional skills in your successor, the Ambassador of Canada. All of them efficiently advised and assisted by Ambassador Berasategui, our Secretary-General. I would also like to welcome amongst us Ambassador Wolfgang Schallenberg, the Secretary-General of the Austrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, whose statement we followed very carefully this morning and we will study it in detail and analyse it.

On various occasions in public and in private I have had the opportunity of setting out in detail Spain's opinion about the situation facing the Conference on Disarmament at this time. I have also had an opportunity to reveal Spain's analysis of the role of this Conference in its present environment in the context of the United Nations, and its foreseeable and desirable task in the future. Allow me today, Sir, to restate our ideas formally in this plenary. The future of the Conference is not guaranteed. It should not be taken for granted that in the present political context everyone agrees on a sure and well-defined future for the Conference. This, and only this, is in our view the ineluctable starting-point for any analysis of its most obvious problems, such as its agenda and the number of members.

The Conference on Disarmament is at this present point in time suffering from an identity crisis whose manifestations and symptoms should not be confused with its deep-rooted and genuine causes. In other words, the Conference has a problem of expansion outstanding and also an agenda problem because its role is not clear in the international community, nor even in the context of the United Nations bodies devoted to disarmament and arms control. Therefore I think it should be said that if the deep-rooted causes were resolved, the complications arising from them could also be resolved easily.

Regarding the possible role of the Conference today and in the future, there are various queries pending. Is it useful to preserve a body specifically devoted to disarmament negotiation? Is it not better and more appropriate at this point in time to integrate disarmament and its specialized bodies into a broader context of security? Has the age of major agreements on disarmament not already passed? Is there really a specific domain for multilateral disarmament negotiations or is there only room for bilateral negotiations? On these and many other questions which remain unanswered we base our conviction that the first phase of the problem consists, as I said, in giving a diagnosis and resolving the doubts that hover over the future of the Conference and even its utility.

In our view, part of the doubts about the future of the Conference are the direct consequence of former times, and specifically of patterns generated by the cold war. Disarmament conceived as an exclusively bilateral negotiation, and therefore depending solely on the initiative of the countries involved in it, the restriction of agreements on disarmament to just one of its aspects, that of mutually assured destruction, and even the elimination of major categories of weapons - all this, as I say, is in our view a legacy from the past which no one is interested in perpetuating. Disarmament and arms control affect first and foremost and in an all-embracing way the very immediate security interests of all States. And this is not just because there are weapons of mass destruction and delivery systems for them, which enables us to think that no one is free of the threat. Conventional weapons too are a major concern, and I would say conventional weapons above all, in so far as unfortunately we seem to have entered a phase of violent regional conflicts involving the large-scale use of conventional weapons, which are therefore directly to blame for all the victims that we see today in the world as a consequence of hostile clashes. If disarmament efforts are undertaken, they must be comprehensive and open to all States, not only as a right, but I would say also as an obligation.

As to disarmament limited to the reduction or elimination of specific categories of weapons, I must say that in our view this is not the only sphere of activity in which an organ such as this Conference can and should carry out its operations. Disarmament also means helping to change attitudes. It is not enough to snatch the weapon from the hands of the potential aggressor. If belligerence persists, the weapon will sooner or later find its way back into the hands of the party that thinks it has reasons to wield it. In other words, it is not enough to destroy and prohibit chemical weapons, and it is not enough to prohibit and eliminate bacteriological weapons. And obviously without a deep-seated change in the expectations of the nuclear-weapon countries and their analyses of the future, with regard to their own security, it is in our view deceptive to think that these weapons can be removed from the face of the Earth in the near future. Consequently, this Conference must and can contribute to changing attitudes, and that is what we understand to be the purpose of some non-proliferation measures, for example, and the institution of confidence-building measures, which we think represent, inter alia, the major path that is now opening up before the Conference on Disarmament.

In Spain's view there is consequently an important function to be discharged by the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, retaining from its present structure the following characteristics: its character as a negotiating and not simply deliberative body, and the rule of consensus. The international community in general, and the United Nations specifically, have two main types of multilateral body devoted to the major problems relating to disarmament and arms control: deliberative bodies on the one hand, and another which is and should remain a negotiating body. The First Committee of the General Assembly should and in fact does make it possible for all member countries to express misgivings and points of view on the subject before us; differences between them do not constitute an obstacle but on the contrary a means of enriching the knowledge each of us has of the concerns and priorities of the others. Meanwhile, the United Nations Disarmament Commission, whose task and purpose are more contentious, has an aim that in our view is less all-embracing than the First Committee to which it reports. Within an agenda that is very short for the sake of efficiency, the Commission should limit itself to providing guidelines, instructions and basically rules of conduct that are applicable to disarmament processes - always following the rule of consensus - from which the Conference, the negotiating body, can and should draw inspiration for its work, although not in an exclusive manner.

Two deliberative bodies, then, and one negotiating one. My Government thinks that this is a satisfactory structure to harness the efforts of States on a or o subject that, at the end of the twentieth century, must become an absolute priority for all the peoples of the globe. In his report of 23 October last year entitled "New dimensions of arms regulation and disarmament in the post-cold-war era", the United Nations Secretary-General takes up this specific characteristic of the Conference, although of course, other observations by the Secretary-General in the same document nevertheless tend to assign it extra functions in addition to the specifically negotiating function. In our view, the present structure of the international community, as I was saying, is conducive to the globalization of disarmament negotiations and enhances the capacities of a body such as this, with the necessary readjustments in the agenda and membership.

Consensus: it is not easy to imagine negotiations on such a sensitive subject for the security of States without resorting to the only way in which the government of a nation expresses its agreement with an international legal rule and therefore manifests its resolve and its legal and political commitment to respect it. As the international community becomes involved in supranational forms of governance, if that is what the future holds, thought might be given to systems other than that of consensus to give shape to the results of negotiations. It is too soon for that now. We cannot see, therefore, how to replace consensus as the culmination of negotiations in this Conference with another type of formula that would oblige States to apply and respect what has been agreed, and I deliberately speak of consensus as a final phase and not consensus as a means of modifying the pace of the negotiations improperly and hampering the reaching of agreement through various kinds of capricious or uncooperative action.

I would venture to point out that now I have not so far mentioned either the problem of the agenda of the Conference or the problem of its membership, for the coming years. In this way I wish to indicate that what we view as the essential role of the Conference on Disarmament as a negotiating body does not depend on our all finding, with greater or lesser difficulty, possible subjects for negotiation in this sphere, or managing to come to an agreement on the number and status of countries that are to participate in it. The clear concept of the role of the Conference in the future is, as I said before, a prior and fundamental issue. The Conference has a function to carry out: therefore let us use it to reach agreement on outstanding and urgent issues in the field of disarmament.

Having set forth the reasons why Spain considers that there is a place in the sun for the Conference on Disarmament, a specific usefulness and in short a necessary purpose, I would now like to devote a few moments to the problem of expansion. We fully agree with the Secretary-General of the United Nations when he says in the report that we mentioned earlier that "the goal is to extend disarmament efforts to include not only bilateral agreements but also multilateral arrangements in a world-wide process involving all States". The reasons that underlie this statement by the Secretary-General are the same as those that lead us to believe that the process of disarmament in the future must be multilateral and based on consensus. A treaty prohibiting chemical weapons between the two main possessors of this type of weapon would never have offered the same degree of security to the international community, or even the signatories of such a bilateral agreement themselves, as that achieved with the entry into force of the chemical weapons treaty. Disarmament agreements negotiated among sovereign States, which are intended to be universally applicable, must also be negotiated in the same way.

The Conference, as Spain understands it, has a meaning in so far as its function is discharged in a multilateral environment. And practically all the delegations present here acknowledge that today the Conference as a multilateral organ is not representative of the world that surrounds it. And therefore it is not truly multilateral. In order to become so it must also increase the number of its members. Since 1984 this has not been possible. But nobody seems to contest the need to expand it periodically. This leads us to deduce that the Conference itself accepts the idea that its multilateral character obliges it to orient itself towards universality, that is to say, to cease to be a body with limited participation. Besides noting this, which has been an obvious trend over recent years, it is also intellectually and politically practically impossible in Spain's view to substantiate the imperative need for the Conference on Disarmament to maintain its characteristic limited profile even now. The only reason put forward to support this is efficiency in negotiations, but in our view this argument does not stand up to a historical analysis of the achievements of the Conference, nor does it explain why the Disarmament Commission in New York, for example, also operates by consensus, is open to all and achieves consensus in a nimble and very reasonable way.

I am also pleased to note that such valuable opinions as those expressed by the distinguished Ambassador of the United Kingdom in a recent statement to this plenary tally with the idea that I have just put forward: big is not always more beautiful, and small is not always a guarantee of efficiency. We are convinced

(Mr. Pérez-Villanueva, Spain)

that given the spirit that prevailed in the Committee on Chemical Weapons in Geneva in the last months of the negotiations, there would have been no difference in completing the final text of the treaty among 40 members of the Conference on Disarmament and 20 observers, which is what happened, and doing so among 60 full members, which is what should have happened. Moreover, reiterating an argument that has already been put forward by my delegation on several occasions before this plenary, there is a direct relationship between desirable universality in acceding to and applying the instruments negotiated in this body and the possibilities of access to it. It is contradictory to require a State that has no right to negotiate it to recognize as desirable for its security the clauses of a treaty of whose scope it has no knowledge. And there is no purpose in saying that certain sovereign countries should confine themselves to making the best possible use of the only status that they are allowed, that of observer in a body that does not accept them as full members, while assuring them that the difference between members and non-members is unimportant. We do not see things in that way.

Another argument, finally, in favour of unlimited membership of the Conference is the fact that it is supported by the budgets of the United Nations, which receive contributions from many countries that have so far not been admitted to the Conference. They include my country, and in no small measure. In the view of Spain there is no valid reason whatsoever to think that the Conference on Disarmament should have limited membership. If it is to be truly multilateral, it must be universal. Having said all this, my country does not consider - I repeat, does not consider - that the doors of the Conference must be permanently open. We think that the open character that we feel this Conference should have should take the form of a commitment to review its composition, and consequently the number of its members, periodically. Otherwise upholding the open nature of the Conference at all costs would lead us into a situation of unviable instability in which the number of participants would frequently vary and would undoubtedly be a disruptive element.

Analysis and periodic review, then, of the membership of the Conference. Here and now we are aware of the need to reach a practical and therefore viable solution of the problem of expansion. In the view of my delegation, first of all, those States that have expressed their intention to join the Conference and have formally requested to do so should become members as soon as possible. Spain has been a member of this group since 24 June 1982. Secondly, this means that account would be taken of the wishes of those countries which have expressed an interest in the Conference and therefore consider themselves in a position to make contributions to it. Nobody should decide for them whether or not they are capable of making a useful contribution. Thirdly, in expanding the Conference the classic elements of balance adopted to date in United Nations circles should not be used as criteria. These criteria have been the direct cause of the inability of the Conference to face up to a very limited increase in the number of its members over the past eight years. Equally impractical as a solution for expediting the expansion of the Conference, in our view, is the idea of linking the status of some of its present components to the admission of new members.

Those of us who are not yet members cannot depend on this. Fourthly, the expansion of the Conference on this occasion should be substantial and probably around 20 new States.

We are aware of the efforts and professional skill of the special coordinator for issues relating to the expansion of the Conference, Ambassador O'Sullivan, with whom we will cooperate closely and whom we wish success, not only out of self-interest but also because of friendship. Both Ambassador O'Sullivan and Ambassador Servais of Belgium, whom we would also like to thank for his efforts in this field, have had the opportunity of observing a phenomenon that was highlighted by Mr. Douglas Graham, the Minister for Disarmament and Arms Control Affairs of New Zealand, before this plenary recently. I refer to the stark contrast in views between members and non-members of the Conference concerning the open-ended nature of participation in this body. Members prefer a closed Conference, non-members an open one. This contrast prompts discouraging and pessimistic thinking on the future of the institution itself if the path that is actually going to be followed is that of a limited, selective, sporadic and in the final analysis artificial expansion of this Conference.

The agenda of the Conference in our view is an important problem to which, in order to tackle the problems of our Conference, a satisfactory solution must be found, with the efficient assistance of Ambassador Marín Bosch. If we have a Conference whose destiny and usefulness are clear for all; if in addition the number of its members has been substantially increased, we have not the slightest doubt that it will be possible to prepare an appropriate agenda that will enable us to make use of the resources that have been invested in the Conference, and which ultimately constitutes a viable instrument for the correct development of the intrinsic activities of a negotiating body operating in a multilateral context and by consensus. In any case, and as a foretaste of what in my delegation's view would be the agenda of our future Conference on Disarmament, we should highlight such chapters as regional measures, confidence-building measures, a big chapter which could cover nuclear aspects, and finally subjects concerning conventional weapons, with a view to transparency in transfers, a subject referred to recently by Ambassador Schallenberg and Ambassador Wagenmakers. All these major chapters have specific aspects on which, in our view, it would be possible to start the work of an Ad Hoc Committee.

With regard to regional measures, it is perfectly appropriate to think about drawing up a long list of measures that could defuse conflicts of this nature whose impulses "become a threat to international peace and global security", to quote the words of Ambassador Wagenmakers before this plenary a few days ago. Confidence-building measures are in our opinion an important prerequisite for any disarmament and arms control agreement: they help to eliminate unknown quantities, dispel misgivings and finally better quantify genuine security and defence needs. In nuclear matters, Spain considers that the time is right to consider the desirability of starting negotiations with a view to the conclusion of a treaty to institute the cessation of nuclear tests. This step alone would not suffice to reduce and eliminate atomic weapons. But it is a necessary step, and in our view there is a growing state of mind, reflected, moreover, in unilateral decisions taken by the nuclear-weapon States, favourable to a decision of this type. The Conference on Disarmament could also be the appropriate place for the international community to become fully aware of the progress made in nuclear disarmament by unilateral or bilateral decisions, and the moderation and self-restraint with which some of the nuclear-weapon States have been planning and conducting tests in recent years. We truly think that this new situation constitutes a favourable environment for the initiation of negotiations on the cessation of nuclear tests at the appropriate time.

Security guarantees for non-nuclear-weapon States are also matters of special importance. The transfer of conventional weapons must also have a place in the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament as one of the aspects that call for strict and effective international control. The excessive accumulation of weapons - excessive because it is unjustified and unrelated to real defence requirements - gives rise to situations of tension and instability which lead to the consequences that we can all remember, for example, in the recent Gulf war.

To conclude, I would say that many of the elements that I have referred to in my statement today before this plenary, many of my propositions coincide with those made by representatives of other member and non-member States before this plenary. This convergence of opinions in this case as in others is an encouraging sign that the solution is within reach. Perhaps the only important message that I would like to leave in this room is that of our renewed hope. It is the renewed hope of a country like Spain which is today a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council. Hope that the whirlwind of events that have shaken the until recently immutable international status quo have at least had the virtue of producing a salutary process of reflection and apparently one of change in institutions that were perhaps somewhat petrified and rooted in obsolete patterns, but are essential and full of promise in this Conference.

In concluding, Sir, allow me to apologize to you and your colleagues in this room for the length of this statement. My only excuse is that we do not take the floor very often, and perhaps this has made my statement today more bearable.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Spain for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to me. That concludes my list of speakers for today. Does any other representative wish to take the floor at this stage? That does not seem to be the case.

The secretariat has distributed today the weekly timetable of meetings to be held by the Conference and its subsidiary bodies next week. Provision is made for an informal open-ended consultation on the improved and effective functioning of the Conference, to be chaired by Ambassador Kamal of Pakistan, and to be held on Thursday 4 March, immediately after the plenary meeting. In accordance with our practice, the timetable is indicative and can be changed if the need arises. If there is no objection, we shall proceed to adopt it.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: May I now turn to another subject? The two reports to be transmitted to the Chairman of the First Committee are being processed now by the secretariat in all languages, under the symbols CD/1183 and CD/1184. No comments have been received in connection with the translations circulated by the secretariat last Monday morning, and we expect the texts in all languages to be available in the delegations' pigeon-holes tomorrow, Friday 26 February, at noon. The secretariat is also taking measures to transmit the two reports, together with the letter of transmittal signed by me, to the technical services at Headquarters for the processing of the relevant documents of the First Committee.

I wish to inform you that I shall be absent from Geneva on official duties during part of next week and therefore, in accordance with rule 10 of the rules of procedure, the next plenary meeting will be chaired by my deputy, Mr. Halatchev.

I have no other business for today, and I now intend to adjourn this plenary meeting. The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will be held on Thursday 4 March, at 10 a.m.

The meeting rose at 11.20 a.m.

CD/PV.645
4 March 1993

ENGLISH

FINAL RECORD OF THE SIX HUNDRED AND FORTY-FIFTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 4 March 1993, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. Christo Halatchev (Bulgaria)

The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 645th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

At the outset, I wish to welcome warmly, on behalf of the Conference and on my own behalf, two distinguished visitors who will participate in our plenary meeting today. The Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Colombia, Her Excellency Wilma Zafra, represents a non-member participating in the work of the Conference, which has recently expressed interest in becoming a new member. This is the first visit of the Vice-Minister to the Conference and I wish her every success in her mission in Geneva. His Excellency the Director of the Department of Security Policy and Cooperation in Europe of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Hungary, Ambassador István Gyarmati, will be addressing the Conference as the first speaker. His presence here reflects the active role of Hungary in our work. Ambassador Gyarmati is involved in important multilateral negotiations and I am happy to see him in our midst. I am sure that the members of the Conference will follow the statements of our visitors with particular interest.

On my list of speakers for today are the representatives of Hungary, Japan, the United States of America, China, Ireland and Colombia. I now give the floor to the representative of Hungary, Ambassador Gyarmati.

Mr. GYARMATI (Hungary): Mr. President, the Hungarian delegation has already conveyed its congratulations on the occasion of the Bulgarian presidency, but let me also in my personal capacity reiterate our full support to you in fulfilling this responsible task. I would also like to express my pleasure that after many years of dealing with European security issues - and after having been one of the lucky authors of important arms control treaties - I have the honour to address the single multilateral disarmament negotiating body of the international community.

With the end of the cold war and the disappearance of the dominantly bipolar character of world affairs multilateral diplomacy has entered a new era. Some have already started to bury arms control, suggesting that it has lost its importance. I am convinced that - maybe unfortunately - the coming years will prove they were wrong. For multilateral disarmament this means a pressing need to apply fresh thinking and new approaches in facing old and especially newly emerging challenges to international peace, stability and security. It is a welcome fact that the multilateral disarmament machinery, including first of all the Conference on Disarmament, is trying to adapt itself to the realities. The two documents recently adopted by the Conference which are to be transferred to the resumed session of the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly testify to this.

The proliferation of arms, especially that of weapons of mass destruction, has been a major security concern in past decades. A number of international agreements -

both global and regional - have been elaborated and are being implemented, all addressing a particular aspect of proliferation. The most specific and perhaps the most important element of this network of legal instruments is the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

(Mr. Gyarmati, Hungary)

At the same time non-proliferation efforts are not - and should not be -limited to the nuclear field. The biological and toxin weapons Convention and the recently concluded chemical weapons Convention - one of the greatest successes in arms control ever - are also relevant to the issue of non-proliferation.

The concept of curbing proliferation has evolved during the decades. In the past, non-proliferation was largely synonymous with the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. In fact, proliferation concerns were mainly confined to the danger of the spread of nuclear weapons. Later, this term was applied also to chemical and biological weapons and subsequently to the delivery systems of weapons of mass destruction. Today, in our view, non-proliferation efforts are - and must be - related to excessive and destabilizing conventional arms build-ups as well. The development of the concept and the relevant measures countering proliferation have been a result of the direct threats posed by the spread of different types of weapons. The increasing importance of the issue was accompanied by the emergence of new facets of proliferation, such as the potential consequences, stemming from the dissolution of the former Soviet Union or the revelations about Iraq's clandestine nuclear programme. These new threats made many people think about the past as the era of stability, thus less dangerous than today. I want to reject these views in the name of those nations which paid a very high price for that stability.

But the time has indeed come to raise international non-proliferation efforts to a level of new quality. One direction should be the strengthening of existing global norms by achieving their true universality and by enhanced verification. At the same time, the enforcement of these global norms is also gathering significance. We believe that the responsibility of the United Nations Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security calls for its more active and widespread involvement in this field.

It is undeniable that the issue of non-proliferation can best be addressed in a multilateral framework. Obviously, questions related to weapons of mass destruction have a dimension extending far beyond countries or regions directly involved and have a significant bearing on global security. The recognition of this element is reflected by the fact that the effective implementation of regional non-proliferation arrangements also requires the contribution of nuclear Powers.

Reflecting the general approach of my Government, the Hungarian delegation in a recent statement emphasized the prevention of armed conflicts as a priority of the security agenda. It was also stated that this could be done through the application of the many tools of preventive international diplomacy. These tools certainly must include international efforts to curb the proliferation of weapons. I would like to acquaint the Conference on Disarmament with the Hungarian policy in this regard. In doing so, my delegation intends to contribute to the important informal consultations on non-proliferation in all its aspects.

(Mr. Gyarmati, Hungary)

Questions of non-proliferation have become a major focus in the arms control and disarmament policy of the Republic of Hungary, a country that does not possess and has no intention whatsoever to possess any type of weapons of mass destruction. Apart from our traditionally firm support and commitment to the principles of non-proliferation, this was also due to the fact that proliferation concerns have moved up on the agenda of European cooperation. Affected by a fragile security environment, we deem it indispensable that the authority of relevant international agreements be strengthened by developing a stronger international consensus. In this regard, we consider it a must that all new States integrated now into the CSCE process adhere to these pillars of international and European security.

We are also of the view that international consultative mechanisms aimed at preventing the diversion of dual-use materials, equipment and technologies relating to the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems still have an important role to play. We support and are ready to contribute to the activities of the respective international consultative mechanisms. Our cooperation with them has helped us a great deal in shaping Hungarian non-proliferation policy. Having in mind the challenges we face, we attach particular significance to the Missile Technology Control Regime, which we hope to be able to join in the near future.

Touching upon some of the particular subjects of non-proliferation, we consider the nuclear component as of primordial importance. The role of the NPT as a cornerstone of international peace and security was further emphasized in 1992 when a number of States, including two nuclear Powers, decided to accede to this legal instrument. It is of particular significance that all permanent members of the United Nations Security Council are States parties to the NPT now. This fact is undoubtedly going to have a beneficial effect on efforts aimed at strengthening the NPT regime and ensuring its full-scale implementation.

Though the welcome increase in the number of States parties to the NPT and the milestone agreements reached in the field of nuclear disarmament have contributed to the improvement of the political environment surrounding the NPT, we cannot yet lean back and relax. The extension and review Conference of the NPT, due in 1995, will raise a whole series of challenges the international community has to live up to. In this context, we strongly believe that the highest priority already during the preparatory phases of the Conference should be assigned to the indefinite extension of the duration of the Treaty. Both this goal and the global acceptance and authority of the NPT can best be served by the further development of verification means available for IAEA and by the appropriate implementation of article VI of the Treaty. In addition to the sweeping cuts in the nuclear arsenals of the two major Powers - and at a next stage of all nuclear-weapon States - the NPT regime would also benefit from real progress in the fields of comprehensive prohibition of nuclear testing, the provision of security guarantees to non-nuclear-weapon States and the prohibition of attacks against nuclear facilities. This latter issue does not currently appear amongst the

(Mr. Gyarmati, Hungary)

priorities of the Conference on Disarmament for the 1993 session, yet we continue to consider it highly relevant to our - and others' - national security, taking also into account some specific regional concerns.

Speaking about nuclear non-proliferation one cannot but repeatedly highlight the responsibility of nuclear suppliers. The application of full-scope safeguards provisions should be a precondition of any nuclear supply. Guided by the desire to strengthen the non-proliferation regime, Hungary's nuclear export policy has always ensured full implementation of these recommendations.

Preventing the spread of chemical weapons is hardly a less compelling task. The recently concluded chemical weapons Convention can be termed as the most serious attempt to curb proliferation by effectively eliminating a whole category of weapons of mass destruction. The very fact that almost 140 States have already signed the Convention demonstrates its global character, a desirable objective of any meaningful effort in the field of non-proliferation as well. This multilateral disarmament agreement is also unique in the sense that it contains explicit provisions which are aimed at preventing proliferation in the interim period leading to a world free from chemical weapons. These provisions clearly set out the conditions under which States parties can transfer certain chemicals to other States. Hungary is already in the process of adjusting its existing regulations to meet the relevant provisions of the CWC.

The biological and toxin weapons Convention also contains appropriate provisions similarly aiming to prevent the proliferation of this weapon of mass destruction. Although the Convention still lacks an adequate verification regime, States parties have introduced and recently up-dated a number of confidence-building measures all aimed at strengthening the authority of this legal instrument and enhancing confidence in the implementation of its provisions. An Ad Hoc Group of Governmental Experts is currently examining potential verification measures of the BWC from a scientific and technical standpoint. Hungary, not only as a country honoured to chair the Ad Hoc Group but also as a State party interested in strengthening the BWC through an effective and workable verification regime, attaches great significance to the work of the Group. Any progress made in this area will undoubtedly contribute to international non-proliferation efforts.

Along with the priority given to weapons of mass destruction, Hungary attaches the greatest importance to the issues of controlling conventional weapons. Current events in different parts of the world, including unfortunately Europe, provide once again clear evidence of the consequences of unconstrained, excessive build-ups of conventional weapons. While recognizing the inherent right of all States to self-defence as embodied in Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, it should be admitted that the excessive accumulation of conventional arms may create grave situations like the one in the Gulf region and elsewhere. Such arms build-ups are fuelled, inter alia, by misperceptions and suspicion resulting from the lack of information on arms acquisition as well as by uncontrolled arms transfers.

Hungary is therefore firmly convinced that this situation can be rectified and the best way to do so is in the framework of the United Nations. Accordingly, Hungary fully endorsed the resolution of the United Nations General Assembly which requested the Secretary-General to establish and maintain a universal and non-discriminatory register of conventional arms that includes data on international arms transfers as well as other information on military holdings and procurement through national production and relevant policies. Hungary is ready to furnish the requested data and give complete background information for the first registration which is to take place by 30 April 1993. Hungary is also ready to consider and then take further steps on this road.

The ideas I have set forth reflect the genuine commitment of Hungary to the cause of non-proliferation. In this spirit I would like to pledge once again the full support of the Hungarian delegation to the on-going efforts in the framework of the Conference on Disarmament.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Hungary for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to me. I now give the floor to the representative of Japan, Ambassador Tanaka.

Mr. TANAKA (Japan): Mr. President, permit me at the outset to congratulate you on the assumption of your country to the presidency of the Conference. I wish you every success in the fulfilment of your responsibilities, and assure you of my delegation's full cooperation toward that end. I would also like to express my gratitude to our previous President, Ambassador Amorim of Brazil, whose skilful leadership contributed greatly to the smooth commencement of our work this year.

Today, I would like to address briefly the issue of transparency in armaments, in particular the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. Last week we heard the interesting speech on this issue by Ambassador Wagenmakers of the Netherlands in which he stressed the importance of gaining the widest possible participation in the Register. He thus appealed to all CD members and observers to provide data and information in accordance with the relevant General Assembly resolutions. My delegation wishes to echo his appeal for the submission of data and information for the first phase of the registration process. Having been involved, from the very start, in the establishment of the Register, Japan strongly supports its primary objective, which is to build confidence among States. Japan will certainly submit its data in a timely manner, and fervently hopes that as many States as possible, especially CD members, will do likewise. I believe that achieving the widest possible participation will add momentum to the process already initiated by the General Assembly and that the Register will serve as a foundation for our further collective endeavours to increase openness and transparency in armaments.

Japan holds the view that regional initiatives have a useful role to play in facilitating the national input of data in the Register. As a matter of fact, in January this year Japan had the privilege to host, together with the Office for Disarmament Affairs of the United Nations, a "Regional Workshop on

(Mr. Tanaka, Japan)

the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms for the Asia-Oceania Region" in Tokyo in an effort to deepen understanding and to enhance the process of achieving greater transparency in armaments throughout the region. This was the second workshop held in Japan on this subject. A report on the Tokyo workshop of last year has, I believe, been circulated by my delegation to CD members and observers.

I am aware of the dissatisfaction of many States with the present relatively simple Register system, but I have to point out that, as envisaged by General Assembly resolution 46/36L, the system is but one element in a stage-by-stage process toward our ultimate goal. The process is still in its early stage and it is the hope of my delegation that the momentum achieved so far will be maintained.

My delegation, like many others, is pleased to see that an early decision was made on the establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on TIA. We hope that the Committee will commence its work without delay and that it will submit a truly substantive report to the United Nations. The international community has entrusted us with the task of addressing a wide range of issues concerning openness and transparency in armaments. My delegation, for its part, places particular importance on the complex issue of the excessive accumulation of arms, including military holdings and procurement through national production. This is an issue which has important implications for regional stability and is one which the General Assembly has requested the Conference to address as soon as possible. Indeed, it is one of the key issues that the group of governmental experts will work on when it is established early next year under the auspices of the United Nations Secretary-General.

As Ambassador Wagenmakers so convincingly argued, it is an area in which we can expect to achieve tangible results in a relatively short time-frame, depending, of course, upon the contributions we make to the work of the 1994 expert group.

Last year, at the informal meetings on questions relating to weapons of mass destruction and transfer of advanced technology with military applications, we heard a wide range of opinions and concerns. Indeed, these are very complicated issues, since they involve strategic, technical and political questions, and sometimes touch upon quite sensitive areas affecting national security and economic interests. For this reason, my delegation believes that further in-depth study and exchanges of views are needed in order to find practical ways and means to increase openness and transparency of activities in these areas. My delegation is ready to participate constructively in the deliberations of the Ad Hoc Committee that has been established to address these subjects.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Japan for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of the United States of America, Ambassador Ledogar.

Mr. LEDOGAR (United States of America): Mr. President, first of all, I would like to congratulate you upon your assumption of the Chair and offer your delegation the full support of my delegation as Bulgaria carries out the important duties of the presidency. I also express my thanks to Ambassador Amorim for his skill in guiding the CD especially in leading us to consensus on the reports to the United Nations First Committee Chairman on the occasion of the resumed session.

Today I too will address the United Nations Register on conventional arms. Our colleague from the Netherlands spoke on the same topic last week, and we just heard today Ambassador Gyarmati of Hungary and Ambassador Tanaka of Japan also speak on the topic of the United Nations Register. I congratulate them both on their timely and thoughtful interventions.

As my colleagues noted, a little over a year ago the United Nations agreed to the concept of a Register of Conventional Arms. United Nations resolution 46/36L was adopted without a dissenting vote. The Register was further elaborated by the United Nations Secretary-General in his 1992 report entitled "Report on the Register of Conventional Arms"; the conclusions of this report were adopted by consensus last fall.

I believe all Governments represented around this table attach great importance to ensuring that the Register is a successful endeavour. The deadline for national submissions, 30 April, is fast approaching. My Government is busily preparing data on conventional imports and exports, along with available background information regarding our military holdings, procurement through national production, and relevant policies.

The United States, along with many others, sees great value in establishing a global confidence-building measure which highlights transparency and openness with regard to conventional arms. Such a global measure can have a positive impact on regional relationships. The Register will enhance confidence, provide stability, help States to exercise restraint, ease tensions, and in the end, strengthen regional and international peace and security.

Ambassador Wagenmakers said last week that "The importance of participation in the Register by as many States as possible cannot be overstated." The United States agrees. The Register will not serve its overall objectives if it turns into an exercise where only a few developed countries participate. The closer we can come to full disclosure by all nations, sharing data on imports and exports of conventional arms in a given year, the greater will be the Register's success.

The United Nations Register is rightly receiving much attention on a regional basis, and the United States compliments this activity. As an example, as was noted by our Japanese colleague, several weeks ago Japan hosted a conference, where the Register was a major topic, attended by several of our colleagues from the CD. In Vienna, the Forum for Security Cooperation has adopted a decision which commits CSCE States to meeting the deadline for

submitting Register data to the United Nations Secretary-General. Moreover, the Forum for Security Cooperation has taken the additional step of agreeing to exchange copies of national submissions among themselves.

At the end of March, Italy, in cooperation with the United Nations, is hosting a conference in Florence where again the United Nations Register and conventional arms are major elements. I understand there may be other important regional activity including conferences to be hosted in Warsaw and Buenos Aires. These are all welcome steps to get the Register up and running. Shouldn't the CD do at least as much as is being done on a regional basis, whether in Vienna, Tokyo, Florence, or elsewhere?

While the CD will be pursuing distinct issues related to transparency in armaments, the United States thinks this Conference could also usefully undertake efforts to give the "New York" track - the Register, a boost. In fact, individually and collectively, members of this Conference should take the lead in promoting the United Nations Register and ensuring its effective operation. But how should the Conference do this? What measures should the CD embark upon with regard to the Register? As a starting-point, I suggest that the CD could do two things. First, the member States could agree collectively that they will provide the Register's requested data and information to the United Nations Secretary-General on time, complying with the Register's 30 April deadline. Second, the CD could agree that we will encourage others to do the same, beginning with non-member participant States of the Conference. As a separate initiative, and noting what our friends in Vienna are doing, I believe that the Conference could also agree that on or about 30 April, when we submit data to the Register we will also exchange informally, among ourselves, here in Geneva, copies of our national submissions.

Now, how could we, the CD, express the view, in a corporate way, that the Register is important and that all members - and non-member participants - should participate? Maybe the CD could adopt a decision. Alternatively, maybe our President could send a letter to the United Nations Secretary-General to express our views, including what the CD is doing on transparency in armaments and what member States intend also to do in support of the Register. There may be other ideas. My delegation would be interested in hearing the views of others. Whatever the CD decides, however, and regardless of the form of our action, we feel the Conference should do something, and should do it soon.

Mr. President, my delegation encourages you to address this issue, either through Presidential consultations, by working with the group coordinators, or otherwise sounding out delegations. We hope that you might undertake to develop a plan or proposal in a timely way which would show the Conference's willingness to support the Register and ensure its effective operation. I offer the full cooperation of my delegation.

In sum, the Register's deadline is almost upon us. The conference on disarmament, as the sole multilateral global negotiating body on disarmament, should pursue not only its own transparency-in-armaments objectives but also

take the lead in supporting and promoting the United Nations Register. What better way for this body to show the international community its resolve of openness and transparency in the area of conventional arms?

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the United States of America for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to me. I can assure Ambassador Ledogar that I have noted the suggestion he has just made. I will give it full consideration and discuss it with the incoming President of the Conference. I now give the floor to the representative of China, Ambassador Hou.

Mr. HOU (China) (translated from Chinese): Mr. President, at the outset, may I on behalf of the Chinese delegation congratulate you once again on taking up the CD presidency and thank your predecessor Ambassador Amorim for his contributions? I would also like to take this opportunity to bid farewell and wish every success to Ambassador Moritán of Argentina, Ambassador Králik of Czechoslovakia, Ambassador Wagner of Germany, Ambassador Tóth of Hungary, Ambassador Shah of India, Ambassador Cambiaso of Italy, Ambassador Ogada of Kenya and Ambassador Hyltenius of Sweden, who have just left their posts, and to warmly welcome Ambassador Lanús, Ambassador Hoffmann, Ambassador Boytha, Ambassador Chandra, Ambassador Nanjira and Ambassador Norberg, who have just joined us and with whom I shall expect to enjoy close cooperation.

Against the present complex and volatile international situation, upheavals in international relations keep cropping up, ushering the world into a historic period of major changes. As the international community has finally rid itself of the cold war and military confrontation between the East and the West, bipolarism has ended and various forces have started to undergo disintegration and reintegration, making the world develop towards multipolarization. In the meantime people of the world are aware that the lasting peace and universal security they have longed for have not been automatically bestowed on them despite the end of the cold war. The international situation remains unstable and insecure and various contradictions are intensifying. Ethnic conflicts and territorial disputes as well as racial and religious differences in quite a number of countries and regions have come to the fore, and some have even escalated into armed conflicts and regional warfare. The international economic situation is also deteriorating, marked especially by the widening gap between the North and the South. All these facts testify that peace and development remain the two paramount pending issues for the world today.

In such a situation the international community is calling all the more strongly for the establishment of a peaceful, stable, fair and just new international order, including the establishment of an equal and mutually beneficial new international economic order, based on the principles of mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, non-aggression and non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries, equality and mutual benefit and peaceful coexistence. All countries in the world should be able to participate in international affairs as equal partners of the international community and to seek common development in an international

environment of lasting peace and security. We are confident that, so long as the people of the world persist in their endeavours, such a new international order will eventually be established.

The relevant resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly emphasize that the effective curbing of the nuclear arms race, the realization of complete nuclear disarmament and the prevention of nuclear war remain a pressing task for the international community and a priority agenda item for the Conference on Disarmament. In recent years some new developments have been witnessed in this respect, like the two START treaties between the United States and the Russian Federation. China welcomes these steps in the right direction and hopes that these treaties can be put into full implementation at an early date in order to reduce the danger of nuclear war. At the same time, the international community has pointed out that the reduction plans involved are preliminary, since even if their implementation is completed according to schedule by the beginning of the next century, these two countries will still possess over 90 per cent of the total nuclear arsenals of the world, sufficient to destroy the globe several times over, not to mention the fact that the modernization of nuclear weapons and the arms race in space remain unchecked. Therefore, the tasks for nuclear disarmament are as strenuous as ever. People of all countries have long aspired to and made unremitting efforts for the early realization of the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of all nuclear weapons. In this respect, States with the largest nuclear arsenals are bound to bear special responsibility in taking the lead to stop the testing, improvement, production and deployment of nuclear weapons, drastically reduce their nuclear arsenals and check the arms race in outer space, thus making their due contribution to comprehensive nuclear disarmament.

In the cause of nuclear disarmament China has never shirked its due responsibilities, but on the contrary has made its contribution by taking a series of significant initiatives. China consistently pursues an independent foreign policy of peace and has never followed a policy of nuclear deterrence. China possesses of a very limited number of nuclear weapons solely for defensive purposes. This explains why on the first day it came into possession of nuclear weapons, the Chinese Government took the lead in unilaterally undertaking not to be the first to use nuclear weapons at any time and under any circumstances. Such an important commitment is of far-reaching significance. We believe that if all nuclear-weapon States assume the same obligation and conclude an international convention to this effect, it will surely contribute to the prevention of nuclear war and the maintenance of world peace.

China fully understands and supports the call by the numerous non-nuclear-weapon States for the provision of security assurances. Hence the Chinese Government took another significant initiative, in unconditionally undertaking not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States or nuclear-free zones. We believe that if all the nuclear-weapon States did likewise the nuclear non-proliferation regime as well as international peace and security could be greatly strengthened. The Chinese delegation hopes that the Conference will proceed towards early

(Mr. Hou, China)

agreements in the above important areas. In this context, my delegation will cooperate closely with the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on negative security assurances, the Ambassador of Romania, and with other delegations.

To promote the early realization of the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons, China is in favour of taking appropriate measures and concrete steps. China supports the request by countries concerned for the establishment of nuclear-free zones on the basis of voluntary agreement and holds that all nuclear-weapon States should respect the status of these nuclear-free zones and undertake corresponding obligations towards them. In this respect China has signed and ratified the relevant protocols to the Treaty of Tlatelolco and the Treaty of Rarotonga. China has consistently opposed the proliferation of nuclear weapons and has never assisted other countries in the development of such weapons. In all the past years, China has made its contribution to the prevention of nuclear proliferation and has acceded to the NPT. In the meantime, as a member State of IAEA, China has actively promoted international cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

China fully understands the strong aspiration of the numerous non-nuclear-weapon States for a ban on nuclear testing and believes that a nuclear test ban, as a specific step in the cause of nuclear disarmament, will have some effect in containing the development of nuclear weapons and must be achieved in the framework of complete nuclear disarmament. From the very beginning China has adopted a highly prudent and restrained attitude towards nuclear testing. We long ago ceased nuclear testing in the atmosphere. We have conducted only a very limited number of tests, the smallest number among the nuclear-weapon States. China has always been in favour of putting the issue of a nuclear test ban on to the agenda of the Conference for intensive and extensive deliberations. China has also constructively supported the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban and actively participated in the work of GSE and GSETT-2. The Chinese delegation appreciates the efforts made by Ambassador Tanaka of Japan, Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban.

The prevention of an arms race in outer space, which is, closely linked to nuclear disarmament, is one of the priority items on the agenda of the Conference and calls for our full attention. China consistently stands for the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of all space weapons. Countries with the strongest space capabilities should immediately stop the development, testing, production and deployment of space weapons and destroy the existing ones. Above all, at a time when the cold war has ended and progress in nuclear disarmament has been achieved, people should seek "star peace" instead of "star wars", and there is hardly any further excuse for the insistent pursuit of such strategically destabilizing programmes as GPS or GPALS. The Chinese delegation has always actively supported the Conference and its Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space in their effort to speed up substantive work. We suggest that apart from discussing CBMs in outer space, the Committee should go a step further and discuss such topics as the prohibition of all types of space weapons,

including anti-ballistic-missile weapons and anti-satellite weapons, the realization of the non-weaponization of outer space and issues like the banning of the use of force and acts of hostility in outer space. We hope that early headway can be achieved in these areas to conclude international agreements acceptable to all parties. We hope that Ambassador Hoffmann of Germany as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Outer Space will achieve early success.

China joined the consensus last year on the United Nations General Assembly resolution concerning transparency in armaments. We welcome the inclusion of this issue in our agenda and favour the establishment of a relevant ad hoc committee. We appreciate the efforts made by Ambassador Zahran of Egypt and Ambassador Wagenmakers of the Netherlands in promoting consultations in this area. In order to facilitate deliberations the Chinese delegation will submit to the Conference a document on China's position concerning the issue of transparency in armaments. We are also ready to exchange views in depth on this topic with all other delegations. China attaches importance to the issue of transparency in armaments and addresses it with an earnest and responsible attitude. We believe that the purpose of TIA should be to enhance the peace, security and stability of various countries and regions and the whole world. Appropriate and practical TIA measures should serve to promote international trust, reduce tension and help various countries determine their adequate armament levels. China holds that TIA should be pursued on the basis of the principle of undiminished security for all countries. In accordance with the United Nations Charter, all countries enjoy the right of individual or collective self-defence. TIA measures should in no way compromise the right of self-defence and the legitimate defence capabilities of all countries. Naturally, countries should for their part refrain from seeking armaments in excess of their security requirements.

China is of the view that TIA measures should be appropriate and practical and formulated by all countries through consultations on an equal basis. We also wish to point out that as different countries and regions are subject to diverse political, military and security conditions, the same TIA measures may produce different effects on them. Therefore, it is not advisable to seek artificial uniformity in the implementation of TIA measures. Bilateral and regional measures for exchanges of military information and for TIA should be encouraged.

In the current international situation it has become an even more pressing task for the international community to further promote the disarmament process and enhance international peace and security. The Conference on Disarmament is also faced with new challenges and opportunities. The successful conclusion of the negotiations on the chemical weapons Convention proves that the Conference on Disarmament possesses considerable vitality and potential. It needs to be supported and strengthened to ensure its improved role. To this end, the Chinese delegation will work even closer with all other delegations and make further contributions.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of China for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Ireland, Ambassador Swift.

Mr. SWIFT (Ireland): Mr. President, since this is the first occasion in this session on which my delegation has spoken in the Conference, may I offer you my congratulations on your assumption of your important office? I am confident that at a particularly important time for the Conference on Disarmament your skill and experience will make a valuable contribution to its work. I should also like to extend my compliments to the Secretary-General of the Conference, Ambassador Berasategui, whose experience and guidance are more than ever an asset in the Conference's work.

There is general agreement among speakers so far in this session that with the conclusion of the negotiations for the chemical weapons Convention, the Conference on Disarmament has entered a new phase. The conclusion of the CWC was an event on which the Conference rightly congratulated itself. Now that it has been completed, the Conference is turning its attention to other issues. It is in our view important that it should make early progress on a number of items which merit special attention, if the credibility which it has won as a result of the CWC negotiations is not to be gradually dissipated. As has been indicated earlier, my delegation regards a nuclear test ban, non-proliferation and transparency in armaments as being among the items CD should now treat as priorities.

This session will also be to a considerable extent a period of self-evaluation for the CD. Its agenda, composition and methods of work are being examined in the light of the new security situation in the world and of the new questions and challenges which confront the international community.

The successful negotiation of the chemical weapons Convention was made possible by the transformation of international security relations that has taken place in recent years. The end of the divisions of the cold war and the new cooperative approach to disarmament and international security questions create a new environment in which this Conference will operate in the future. This new environment has implications for the composition and agenda of the Conference. My delegation is convinced that an imaginative and forward-looking approach to both of these issues is required.

The chemical weapons Convention reflects the old and the new order of problems. It deals both with chemical weapons and facilities for their production and with the chemical industry worldwide. The counterpart of destruction of weapons and production facilities is a monitoring of industry and guarding against proliferation. Not many States possess or have produced chemical weapons. A much larger number of States produce or use the toxic chemicals which can go to make these weapons and which are listed in the schedules to the Convention. The provisions of the Convention which relate to monitoring the chemical industry are of concern to many countries - in fact, to every country with even a medium-size chemical industry.

(Mr. Swift, Ireland)

In another important area, the uncontrolled spread of conventional armaments is aggravating many regional and local conflicts and generating instability on a scale not seen for many years. The European Council has already expressed alarm at the stockpiling of conventional weapons in certain regions, and the EC member States have made clear their support for the United Nations Register of arms transfers. The CSCE Council of Ministers has also expressed concern about the threat posed by excessive accumulation of conventional weapons. These situations point to what my delegation believes is a new dimension in dealing with issues of disarmament and arms control. Many of the issues which CD is now called on to address - non-proliferation and transparency in transfers, in particular - will of their very nature concern and involve a great number of countries. The desire so often expressed here that the chemical weapons Convention should quickly become a universal instrument does not, in the view of my delegation, simply give expression to something seen as politically desirable; what is involved is ensuring the ultimate effectiveness of the Convention itself by making its provisions on industry verification and transfers universally binding. The same concern will inevitably arise in relation to non-proliferation in other areas and in relation to arms transfers. The world economy operates more and more openly, and countries which do not have major military establishments or industries can have significant potential to be agents or accessories in proliferation.

The nature of many new issues confronting this Conference appears therefore to call for a generous approach to the question of CD's composition and to point to an enlargement which will be wider rather than more restricted. It seems clear that it is in this way that CD can best equip itself to deal in a fully satisfactory way with the important questions on its agenda.

My delegation is familiar with differing arguments put forward as to the scope of expansion. I should like to make only two comments. Firstly, it does not appear to us that the danger of lack of consensus, or of a veto holding up the work of this Conference, will increase proportionately in line with an increase in membership. The countries which have applied to date to join CD have demonstrated in various ways a commitment to disarmament. The danger to consensus in an enlarged CD will not in our view be significantly greater - if indeed it is greater at all - than at present. Secondly, arguments have been put forward about a need for balance in any expansion. We know that we live in a world radically changed from that of 10 or 20 years ago in terms of security and threats to security. It would not be logical or consistent with realities in the new situation, in our view, to insist on what the distinguished Under-Secretary of State of Finland called a mathematical balance in an expansion of membership.

As the countries here will be aware, Ireland has since the 1950s made a contribution to the disarmament debate in the United Nations and elsewhere. Our association with the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons is well known. We are happy that the Treaty is achieving ever-widening acceptance, and we welcome in particular the recent accession of France and China. The 1995 NPT review and extension conference will be critically

important for the future of the NPT. It is worth noting in this context that many of the issues that will affect the future of the Treaty are on the agenda of this Conference and the consideration given to them here can be expected to have a significant influence on the outcome of the 1995 conference. We believe that an enlarged CD could make an important contribution to the success of that conference.

I should also like to draw attention to the proposal put forward by Ireland in the First Committee on the United Nations General Assembly last year for a code of conduct on arms transfers. We welcome the establishment of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and we hope that all States will submit their returns to the Register by the due date of 30 April. However, while transparency in armaments is very important, we believe that more far-reaching action is needed to prevent excessive accumulations of conventional weapons that can threaten regional and international stability and security.

We do not believe that the time is ripe for agreement on binding legal commitments on force levels and arms holdings. We do however believe that the dangers of the current situation would be greatly reduced if there were acceptance by arms producers and purchasers of a set of politically binding principles and criteria. The principles on which such a code could be based might include transparency in arms transfers, maintaining armed forces only at a level dictated by legitimate security needs, the exercise of responsibility and restraint in transfers, consultation with other States as appropriate and controlling the activities of arms dealers and suppliers. Criteria for transfers would have regard to the situation in purchasing countries and their commitment to respect international norms and standards. Appropriate mechanisms might be elaborated to enable States concerned by large accumulations of weapons by others to raise these concerns at the international level and ultimately with the Security Council. Models for action of this kind already exist. In our view the adoption of such a code would be a very valuable step towards averting situations where unmonitored accumulation of weapons leads to regional conflict. We hope that the proposal for a code will receive serious attention and we believe that it can be a useful element in the debate on this issue in CD or elsewhere.

In concluding, I should like to underline once again Ireland's interest in contributing actively and constructively to the process of disarmament. Our interest has been a consistent and focused one which goes back over many years. We applied for membership of CD in 1982. The time is now ripe in our view for a substantial enlargement of this Conference, in order to reflect the new international security situation and to make the CD capable of accommodating all States which have applied for membership and which have a real interest in contributing to its work. I can assure you, Mr. President, that Ireland is ready to make its contribution.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Ireland for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Colombia, Her Excellency Wilma Zafra.

Mrs. ZAFRA (Colombia) (translated from Spanish): Mr. President, allow me to extend to you and through you to this honourable assembly my warmest greetings and my pleasure at finding myself here today.

The end of the cold war has opened up new prospects and renewed hopes in the area of disarmament. The recent agreements between the Russian Federation and the United States are an important step in the history of disarmament and although the risk of nuclear confrontation between the two super-Powers has lessened, it is also true that the risk of horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons is more manifest today than ever before and its use more possible in one or other of the conflict scenarios that have been highlighted by the end of the East-West confrontation. In other words, disarmament issues were not exclusive to the cold war and now have greater force than ever.

As the Secretary-General of the United Nations said in his report on "New dimensions of arms regulation and disarmament in the post-cold-war era" (A/C.1/47/7), disarmament and arms regulation go hand in hand with political and economic questions. We consider that the relationship between disarmament and development is a cornerstone of any effort to consolidate a new regime of international security. The new concept of security is not only military but also ethnic, economic, social and ecological, as was stated a few days ago to this very forum by Her Excellency Baroness Margaretha of Ugglas, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden. In this connection, any effort in the field of disarmament and arms control should be considered in a broadened context of international security.

Colombia has stated in a number of gatherings that there is a need to respect the competences of the various United Nations bodies. Under Article 11 of the Charter, it falls to the General Assembly to consider the principles governing disarmament and the regulation of armaments. We view with concern the recommendation that the Security Council should play a greater role in disarmament questions. Considering that some of the major arms producers in the world are members of the Security Council, we wonder whether it is feasible for the Council to be allowed greater interference in "disarmament matters, and in particular, the enforcement of non-proliferation" as suggested by the Secretary-General in his report. In the same way, the Conference on Disarmament should remain a negotiating body and the First Committee and the Disarmament Commission should retain their deliberative role. The report recommends a reassessment of the machinery of the Organization devoted to disarmament questions. Colombia considers that the framework laid down by the Final Document of the 1978 special session is still valid and appropriate. The problem is not a structural one but one of political will. We also view with concern the trend towards reducing the staff of the secretariat, which would have adverse repercussions on our work.

A few weeks ago we attended the ceremony for the signature of the Convention for the prohibition of chemical weapons in Paris. Colombia was one of the 130 countries that signed this international instrument and we are pleased with that. Following the arduous task of negotiating this Convention here in this forum, some think that the Conference on Disarmament now has no agenda for its work. We are not of that opinion. Nuclear disarmament is a

major task that still lies ahead of us. If agreements can be arrived at for the prohibition of biological weapons and chemical weapons, why cannot a convention be concluded for the prohibition of nuclear weapons? Within this context a first concrete and effective step could be a complete nuclear test ban. The present moratorium on nuclear testing by various countries that possess nuclear technology, we believe, provides a favourable opportunity. Thus the conclusion of an agreement on negative assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States would be desirable, without of course losing sight of the real objective of nuclear disarmament.

The subject of transparency in armaments is a subject of special interest to my country. Without overlooking the threat presented by nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, we think that the real threat to international peace and security is posed by conventional weapons. For several years now in other forums Colombia has addressed the problem of the continued trade in weapons that fuels and perpetuates regional conflicts and the illicit traffic in weapons that exacerbates phenomena such as terrorism, drug trafficking and subversion. In this context, we have promoted the consideration and treatment of the problems inherent in the stockpiling, transfers and production of and illicit traffic in conventional weapons, and we were the sponsors of resolution 43/75 I. Colombia participated in the group of 18 governmental experts that prepared the United Nations study on the transparency in international transfers of arms, which was called for by that resolution. The study points to the importance of transparency in the field of armaments in the context of the peaceful solution of conflicts and recommends that all States should attach high priority to the eradication of the illicit traffic in weapons and take action towards that end. The recommendations of this study were taken up in resolutions 46/36 L and 46/36 H, the first of which led to the addition of the subject of transparency in armaments to the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament.

The Register of arms transfers established in 1991 by the United Nations is a confidence-building measure that imposes no obligation whatsoever, except the moral obligation on the State that agrees to participate in this exercise. In the initial phase the Register will cover information on transfers of certain conventional weapons whose stockpiling and transfer might be considered dangerous for the maintenance of international peace and security. At a later stage that will start in 1994 a group of governmental experts will study the operation of the first phase of the Register and provide the necessary guidance for its expansion to include information on national production and weapons stocks in the arsenals of those countries that provide information. Although this will not eliminate illicit transfers of weapons, it could have a deterrent effect. The Register could provide an analytical basis to pursue the more ambitious phase of real verification and the establishment of an international code of conduct on arms transfers. Although we think that work on these subjects is of the greatest interest, we must not lose sight of the fact that confidence-building measures such as transparency in the transfer of weapons is not a valid alternative to a focus on genuine and real disarmament.

Allow me now, Sir, to refer to a burning issue in this chamber - the membership of the Conference on Disarmament. As many delegations have already said in this forum, the present membership of the Conference on Disarmament is a reflection of the cold war and therefore it is time to change it. Some of the members of this body are worried that a significant increase in the number of members would make the negotiations less effective and flexible. We are convinced that that view is incorrect. The negotiations on the Convention for the prohibition of chemical weapons lasted too many years without any significant progress being made, and only a change in political will among the main military Powers allowed the rapid conclusion of this Convention. Political will is the key to negotiations, not the number of participants. Allow me to give you an example: in the International Labour Organisation, not only delegations from practically all countries participate in the elaboration of conventions, but an equal number of representatives of workers and employers. This has not prevented them from adopting more than 170 conventions in 70 years of work. It would appear that there is greater convergence as to the ideals of labour than the ideals of peace. In this connection we consider that participation in the Conference on Disarmament should be open to all States that consider that they can make a contribution to the negotiations on disarmament and arms control. Certainly not all the delegations will participate in an equal fashion in all the ad hoc committees or working groups of this Conference.

Finally, Mr. President, allow me to refer to the fact that last week, on 24 February, my Government presented to the Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament a formal application to join the Conference on Disarmament as a full member. We hope that this application will be given a favourable reception and we reiterate to you and to this august assembly our desire to cooperate in subjects of such great importance for mankind.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Colombia for her statement and for the kind words she addressed to us.

That concludes my list of speakers for today. Does any other representative wish to take the floor at this stage? This does not seem to be the case.

You will recall that, as agreed at the Presidential consultation held on 20 January, there will be no meetings of the Conference and its subsidiary bodies next week. The timetable that has been circulated today concerns the meetings to be held during the following week, between 15 and 19 March. As usual, the timetable is merely indicative and we might change it or add other meetings if necessary. In this connection, I hope that we will soon be able to appoint the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency in Armaments, so that this subsidiary body may start its work without delay. If I hear no objection I shall consider that the Conference adopts the timetable.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: I recognize the representative of Chile.

Mr. TIRONI (Chile) (translated from Spanish): First of all, since I am taking the floor for the first time in this meeting, I would like to congratulate you on your appointment to the post of President and offer you our full support and also take the opportunity to congratulate Ambassador Amorim, who has just concluded his term in the Chair. We would like to take the floor briefly to express our support for the remarks made by the delegation of Colombia, especially in this presentation on behalf of its Vice-Minister, and welcome the fact that we listened very carefully to those words and also those spoken by the distinguished Ambassador of the United States, Mr. Ledogar, as far as transparency in transfers in armaments is concerned. As you know, Chile fully supports this process of transparency and we are prepared to participate very actively in the work on this topic. We think that the American proposal has very valuable elements in it that should prompt us to give it detailed consideration, for instance the exchange of information here in this Conference, both between member States and non-member States of the Conference on Disarmament. Also on this matter, we favour all steps that lead to the strengthening of the Conference on Disarmament and these initiatives, like the one just indicated, as well as the promotion of meetings and seminars on the creation of a climate of confidence, are activities which will lead to this strengthening that we seek. Finally, I would also like to remind you of the intention and the aim declared by the Chilean authorities to hold meetings in my country during this year and next year on confidence-building measures to contribute to this process, and finally to say that, in the same way, we are prepared to cooperate and participate actively in the various meetings that have already been scheduled and the others that the Ambassador of the United States was so good as to propose.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Chile for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair.

Since this is the last plenary meeting for this year's session of the Conference on Disarmament under the presidency of Bulgaria, let me express to all delegations in this chamber our sincere appreciation for the cooperation and valuable support which they have so kindly accorded to us in discharging the duties of the presidency. The excellent start made by the Conference under the skilful leadership of Ambassador Amorim of Brazil has greatly facilitated our task.

I am pleased to note that the Conference on Disarmament has been able to draft and adopt two special reports representing the collective views of member

States on the United Nations Secretary-General's report "New dimensions of arms regulation and disarmament in the post-cold-war era", and on the status of the ongoing review of its agenda, composition and methods of work. We can find satisfaction in the fact that the Conference has fulfilled this urgent task in a spirit of cooperation and mutual understanding. This has made it possible to transmit, in time, these important reports for the attention of the resumed session of the First Committee.

I would like to thank the coordinators for their efforts and significant contribution to the work of the Conference.

(The President)

I could not fail to express my delegation's appreciation to the Secretary-General of the Conference and Personal Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General, Ambassador Berasategui, whose assistance and friendship have made it easier for us to fulfil our duties. My gratitude goes also to all the members of the secretariat, as well as to the interpreters, translators, documentation and conference services whose competence and dedication made our work more effective.

In conclusion, I would like to extend to the next president, Ambassador Shannon of Canada, my delegation's best wishes for success in the exercise of his mandate. We are sure that under his competent leadership the Conference will be able to carry out its work in the most efficient manner.

As envisaged in the timetable for this week, the Conference will hold an informal open-ended consultation on its improved and effective functioning, under the chairmanship of Ambassador Kamal of Pakistan in this conference room, immediately after this plenary meeting.

That concludes our work for today, and I now intend to adjourn this plenary meeting. The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will be held on Thursday, 18 March, at 10 a.m.

The meeting rose at 11.35 a.m.

CD/PV.646
18 March 1993

ENGLISH

FINAL RECORD OF THE SIX HUNDRED AND FORTY-SIXTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 18 March 1993, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. Gerald Shannon (Canada)

The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 646th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament, and I wish now to make my opening statement as President.

I am pleased and honoured to assume the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament and, on behalf of our colleagues, I wish to thank the outgoing President, Dr. Radoslav Deyanov of Bulgaria, for his excellent direction following his assumption of this role on 15 February 1993. As President I also wish to welcome today the presence of, and the statement by a United Nations women's delegation, the conference on "Women in the peace process", on the occasion of the United Nations International Women's Day, which was observed on 8 March. While the Conference on Disarmament was not in session on that day, the United Nations as a whole marked the occasion, most notably by the passage in the human rights Commission of a resolution on integrating the rights of women with the human rights system.

Since the Conference on Disarmament opened on 19 January, we have made worthwhile progress on furthering our work, including an important early agreement to focus on four items of our agenda dealing with a nuclear test ban, transparency in armaments, negative security assurances, and the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The Conference on Disarmament has also responded to the report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations entitled "New dimensions of arms regulation and disarmament in the post-cold-war era" with a number of recommendations, most notably, in Canada's view, the emphasis placed on reinforcing regional approaches to security concerns and the commitment to intensify consultations on improved and effective functioning of the Conference.

The Conference on Disarmament also produced a report on the "Ongoing review of the agenda, composition and methods of work of the Conference". Ambassador Paul O'Sullivan of Australia and Ambassador Miguel Marín Bosch of Mexico were appointed special coordinators to review respectively the question of membership and the agenda. Their work will soon be concluded and I strongly support their meaningful contribution in working towards a successful resolution of these issues.

The resumed session of the First Committee in New York ended on 12 March and adopted by consensus a resolution on reform of the arms control and disarmament machinery. The resolution underscored the distinctive roles of each of the three multilateral arms control and disarmament bodies; secondly, it provided additional impetus to the ongoing work of rationalization of the three bodies; thirdly, it provided an opportunity for focused consideration of practical ways to enhance the effective interaction of these three bodies; and fourthly, it supported the strengthening of the Office for Disarmament Affairs. We note that the resolution calls on the Conference on Disarmament to reach early agreement on the question of its membership; and it stresses the importance of further enhancing the dialogue and cooperation among the First Committee, the United Nations Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament.

(The President)

The results of the resumed session of the First Committee represent a modest, but nevertheless important first step in reforming the arms control and disarmament mechanisms within the United Nations. But a great deal remains to be done: in the Canadian view the overall process continues to reflect procedures and attitudes more in keeping with the past than with present-day realities. We need to accelerate the task of rationalization; of setting concrete and practical priorities; and generating more genuine dialogue. Now that East/West polarization is over, there is the possibility for greater functional cooperation on specific issues among delegations from differing groups and perspectives.

My delegation has suggested that one approach to enhance the arms control and disarmament process would be to develop a greater degree of coordination between the United Nations Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament, so that the United Nations Disarmament Commission deliberations could become more relevant and results-oriented. The Chairman of the First Committee, Ambassador Elaraby of Egypt, has suggested that the United Nations Disarmament Commission be an "antechamber" for the Conference on Disarmament. It has also been suggested that the United Nations Disarmament Commission could forward suggestions directly to the Conference on Disarmament without first having to pass them through the First Committee. We think we need to show greater flexibility in our work. The United Nations Disarmament Commission prepares the groundwork for the Conference on Disarmament through the development of principles as well as providing, at least potentially, a degree of focus for the Conference on Disarmament agenda. Closer cooperation and some mechanism for linkage or dialogue is, in our view, required in the short term, if these two bodies are to remain relevant in the rapidly changing arms control and disarmament environment.

I wish now to address some substantive issues wearing, if I may, my Canadian hat. The non-proliferation Treaty is the linchpin of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime. It serves as an effective barrier to the horizontal spread of nuclear weapons and at the same time sets a framework for nuclear and general disarmament. In addition, it reinforces the verification role of IAEA safeguards and contributes to peaceful international nuclear cooperation and commerce. The non-proliferation Treaty is thus a vital instrument for international peace, security and economic well-being in the modern world.

Collectively we are much closer to the goal of universal accession to the non-proliferation Treaty; some 156 countries are now parties to the Treaty, but about 33 are still outside this keystone arrangement. Collectively we will have to redouble our efforts on this front. The process of extending the non-proliferation Treaty began formally with the passage of an enabling resolution at the forty-seventh General Assembly last fall. The first Preparatory Committee will meet in May in New York. We want to ensure a smooth and effective process on behalf of indefinite extension of the non-proliferation Treaty, and make the right administrative and procedural decisions in aid of that goal. But the non-proliferation Treaty is not an end

(The President)

in itself; it is a means to achieve, through non-proliferation, general and complete disarmament. This means that we must not only think in terms of indefinitely extending the non-proliferation Treaty, but also we must collectively defend the non-proliferation Treaty against those who seek to vitiate it and avoid its disciplines. In the present context I refer, of course, specifically to the action taken two weeks ago by the Democratic People's Republic of North Korea. Canada has expressed its grave concern over the decision of North Korea to withdraw from the non-proliferation Treaty. On behalf of the Government of Canada, the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Barbara McDougall, has urged that country to reconsider its retrograde decision. I am sure that sentiment is shared by the majority of States.

We have seen remarkable progress with respect to existing nuclear weapons. This progress directly responds to the ideals set out in article VI of the non-proliferation Treaty. Canada applauds the great progress that has been achieved in the reduction of nuclear weapons over the last few years. Well-deserved credit should accrue to the American and Russian negotiators who achieved Start I and II and the INF, among other salutary arrangements. The world is a safer, more secure place as a result of their efforts. But these achievements were made in a bilateral context. The time is ripe to widen the focus of our collective attention onto nuclear weapons more generally than the United States of America/Russia context. The other nuclear-weapons States should begin to consider how they too could participate in the reduction of their nuclear arsenals.

Again, wearing my Canadian hat, I would like to turn to the Conference on Disarmament agenda. The primary role of the Conference on Disarmament is of course to negotiate global arms control and disarmament instruments. The Conference on Disarmament can also usefully conduct pre-negotiation discussions, as it currently does on a nuclear test ban, and on outer space. But the actual negotiation in the Conference on Disarmament of a comprehensive test-ban treaty to eliminate all nuclear testing in all environments for all time remains a priority Canadian objective.

The current situation gives grounds for optimism about the prospects for the negotiation of a comprehensive test-ban treaty. Of the declared nuclear Powers, the French moratorium has been extended. The legislated American moratorium does not run out until July of this year, and our understanding is the United States Congress has mandated the pursuit of an agreement on banning testing for several years into the future. For its part, Russia has extended its moratorium until July 1993.

Momentum, once slowed, is very difficult to re-establish. Canada urges these nuclear-weapons States and those who have not yet declared a moratorium to seize the present opportunity and make meaningful progress towards a verifiable comprehensive test-ban treaty.

Conference on Disarmament membership clearly is an issue which has been discussed extensively here and in New York at the resumed First Committee and I wish Ambassador O'Sullivan well in his efforts to reach consensus. Conference on Disarmament procedures and membership are closely linked, but they are subsidiary to its substantive negotiating agenda. These issues should not be permitted to overshadow our substantive agenda. Canada has recognized for some time that the current Conference on Disarmament membership no longer reflects the changing international security environment. We in Canada think exclusivity is no longer acceptable. Collectively as Conference on Disarmament members, we are now in the process of defining criteria for changing the membership of the Conference on Disarmament. However, many problems regarding membership need first to be answered: how can limited membership being advocated by some be justified in 1993? Why should countries be excluded because they are situated in a certain geographic region? And who is to judge that countries be excluded because they are not directly involved in the problems emerging from the new international security environment?

The United Nations funds the operations of the Conference on Disarmament and all United Nations members have assessed costs. In our view it is unthinkable in this new age of international cooperation and democratization that United Nations Member States can be called upon to fund a multilateral organization but be excluded from its membership. Canada believes strongly that any interested State which applies for membership in the Conference on Disarmament should be welcomed as full members.

The third substantial issue I wish to address is transparency in armaments and the arms Register. With the passing of the cold war has come a move away from a singular preoccupation with the threat posed by nuclear weapons and increased attention on the need to control the unrestrained transfer of conventional arms, particularly to regions of chronic instability and conflict. In the wake of the Gulf war, the establishment of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms was an important step forward in removing the veil on the international trade arms trade. By enhancing transparency, the Register offers the hope of building confidence and reducing perceptions of military vulnerabilities which can serve in turn to stem dangerous levels of regional arms accumulations.

For our part, Canada will submit its report to the Register in full and by the 30 April 1993 deadline and we strongly urge others to do the same. In addition to the required information on imports and exports the Canadian report will also contain a breakdown on our military holdings of the seven major weapons systems enumerated in the Register. This reflects not only our commitment to the Register but also our view that it is essential that it be expanded at an early date to include military holdings and procurement through national production.

It is important to remember that the Register is not an end in itself, nor is the transparency which it is meant to promote. It is only useful if it serves to alter the behaviour of States and contributes to a reduction of the arms trade. Canada supports the suggestions made by the Netherlands, the United States and others that members of the Conference on Disarmament take a lead role in supporting the Register by submitting their reports in full and on time and in urging other Member States to do the same. We hope that the

Conference on Disarmament can energize movement on the issue of transparency in armaments and that the current session will provide productive debate on this issue.

To conclude, in his "New dimensions" report, the Secretary-General of the United Nations noted that three key themes - integration, globalization, and revitalization - are the foundation of an intensified international effort to enhance the effectiveness of arms control and disarmament. The Secretary-General's thesis is based on the assumption that the world community has moved away from atavistic notions of international security based on cold war rhetoric. It has become apparent that the cold war distinction between East and West, North and South has been overtaken by changes in the international security environment. We need to explore ideas on new approaches to the arms control and disarmament machinery, with a view to making that machinery more forward-looking, efficient and results-oriented. Renewed and constructive cooperation can be a useful component in pursuing non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament, by facilitating development of consensus positions as well as isolating any recalcitrants.

As we collectively noted in our response to the Secretary-General's "New dimensions" report, there is the need to liberate the term "arms control and disarmament" from its cold war preoccupation with numbers of weapons. As important as this is, arms control and disarmament is now seen to both embrace and constitute a part of a far broader process of confidence-building, of transparency, of accountability, of verification and, most importantly, of promoting less reliance on weapons and more reliance on genuinely cooperative mechanisms for creating and enhancing international peace and security.

Colleagues, I look forward to serving as your President and will do all I can to make this a most productive period of this year's Conference.

That concludes my opening statement. Before we proceed with our regular business for today, I now give the floor to the Secretary-General of the Conference and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General, who will read out the message addressed to us by the conference on "Women in the peace process" which was held last week in Geneva, some of whose members are in the gallery.

Mr. BERASATEGUI (Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations):

More than 70 women from 22 countries gathered on 8 March 1993 at the Palais des Nations to mark International Women's Day. They adopted the following message:

"We once again wish to convey to you our concerns about the slow progress in achieving disarmament, and at the same time express our support for all your efforts to advance the disarmament goals.

(Mr. Berasategui, Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations)

"The theme of our meeting this year is 'Women in the peace process'. We are looking particularly at violence in its many manifestations of which women are all too often the victim but against which women also have a remarkable history of resistance.

"Armed conflict and war are unacceptable acts of violence. Their elimination and prevention are at the heart of our deliberations. We consider that disarmament, and nuclear disarmament in particular, is crucial to overcoming violence. Women can make a major contribution to the peace and disarmament process. In fact, we consider the participation of women as essential.

"We appreciate the fact that since March 1992 a number of significant steps in arms reduction and disarmament have been taken. Thanks to your efforts, the chemical weapons Convention was adopted and is now open for signature and ratification by Governments. We will do our part to see that our Governments will become parties to the convention.

"We welcome also the recent agreement between the Governments of the United States of America and the Russian Federation to significantly reduce their nuclear-weapons arsenals. We hope that this process will be continued and result soon in further reductions. We hope also, that these negotiations will be joined by the other nuclear-weapons States.

"We are conscious that the destruction of nuclear weapons bears heavily on the environment. We urge the Conference on Disarmament to do everything possible to reach agreements that prevent the further production of weapons and their delivery systems. Our Earth and its peoples can no longer carry the burden of the production and then destruction of weaponry.

"We wish to underline four specific issues that are of particular concern to us at this time:

"1. We welcome the establishment of an Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban, and urge you to begin negotiations in order to reach a speedy conclusion on a comprehensive test-ban treaty. France, the Russian Federation and the United States are observing moratoria on nuclear weapons testing at this time. We congratulate them and urge them to decide on extending them further. We call on China and the United Kingdom to also declare moratoria of their own. This is the time for the Conference on Disarmament to move ahead with the negotiations for a treaty to prohibit all nuclear-weapons testing for all times.

"2. We emphasize again the urgency of achieving nuclear disarmament. We call on you to begin negotiations for a convention on prohibiting the production of all nuclear weapons and on destroying existing stockpiles.

(Mr. Berasategui, Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations)

"3. Contrary to our expectations that improved international relations, especially between East and West, would lead to a significant decrease in arms transfer and sales, the volume continues, and even increases in certain cases. We welcome the establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency in Armaments. We ask that the question of curbing arms transfers and sales be included in the mandate of the Committee.

"4. We fully agree with your statement contained in document CD/1183, paragraph 11, that disarmament is a collective responsibility. We see this responsibility as being not only one of Governments, but also one of every country's citizens. We therefore repeat our request of a few years ago, that you consider ways of improving access of non-governmental organizations to the Conference on Disarmament, including women's movements working for disarmament.

"We consider these to be urgent problems needing to be resolved. The changed international climate should make progress toward genuine disarmament possible.

"In conclusion, we wish to assure you of our continued support for all steps you take on the way to general and complete disarmament."

This ends the message of the conference on women in the peace process.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Secretary-General of the Conference and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General for reading out the message of the gathering on "Women in the peace process" to the Conference, and I thank the gathering on "Women in the peace process" for their strong and supportive statement.

Several members have expressed the wish to make statements in connection with the message received by the Conference, and as agreed at the presidential consultation yesterday, I shall proceed now to give them the floor, before we begin with the list of speakers for today. I now give the floor to the coordinator of the Group of 21, Ambassador Goonetilleke.

Mr. GOONETILLEKE (Sri Lanka): Mr. President, may I, at the outset, congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Conference? I wish to express our appreciation of the excellent manner in which your predecessor Mr. Deyanov of Bulgaria conducted the affairs of this Conference.

I wish to make a brief statement on behalf of the Group of 21 to welcome the presence amidst us today of the representatives of the 1993 Women's Gathering for International Women's Day. We are happy to note that the International Women's Day was celebrated on 8 March all over the world. It is encouraging that more than 70 women from 22 different countries were able to participate in the meeting held at the Palais des Nations to mark the occasion.

(Mr. Goonetilleke, Sri Lanka)

The members of the Group of 21 take this opportunity to express their appreciation to the Women's Gathering for International Women's Day for their valuable contribution towards universal peace and disarmament. The Women's Gathering, which consistently attaches the utmost priority to universal peace and disarmament, stands out as an effective international on-governmental women's organization, in the promotion of greater universal awareness and interest in the subject of world peace and disarmament. Through its activities, the Women's Gathering remains a source of inspiration and strength to all those who are dedicated to the noble cause of peace and disarmament, including this important forum.

This year the Women's Gathering have chosen "Women in the peace process" as the theme for their meeting. Being conscious of the tragic consequences of war and armed conflicts on women and the increasing level of violence against them in conflict situations, the Group of 21 recognizes that it is timely and appropriate that the Women's Gathering has highlighted this issue as a priority area in its deliberations.

We wish to underline the fact that the interest in and commitment towards disarmament and particularly nuclear disarmament, manifested by the Women's Gathering for International Women's Day transcends national boundaries and has become a symbolic expression of mankind's aspiration for global peace and disarmament. While warmly welcoming the message of International Women's Day, the Group of 21 look forward to their moral and active encouragement in the work of the CD.

On behalf of the Group of 21, I wish to extend our best wishes to the Women's Gathering for their continued efforts in the activities related to universal peace and disarmament.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the coordinator of the Group of 21 for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to me and to my predecessor. I now give the floor to the coordinator of the Western Group, Ambassador Wagenmakers.

Mr. WAGENMAKERS (Netherlands): Mr. President, I would like to use this occasion to extend the warmest congratulations of my delegation on your assumption of the important office of President of the Conference on Disarmament. I wish you every success and I want to very much assure you of the full support of my delegation. I would also like to use this opportunity to extend the appreciation and gratitude of my delegation to your predecessor, our Bulgarian colleague, Minister Counsellor Deyanov of Bulgaria.

On behalf of the Western Group, I should like to respond briefly to the message addressed to the Conference on Disarmament on 8 March 1993 to mark International Women's Day, as read out a moment ago by the Secretary-General of the Conference. Due to the meeting of the resumed session of the First Committee in New York, from 8 to 12 March, Western Group delegations were this time unable to follow closely the international women's meeting in

(Mr. Wagenmakers, Netherlands)

Geneva. Nevertheless, the Western Group would like to use this opportunity to thank publicly the participants in the womens gathering for their important message, of which it has taken note with interest.

Rather than commenting in detail on the points raised in the women's message to the CD, I should like to express my support for the general observation that "women can make a major contribution to the peace and disarmament process". Indeed, such a role by women all over the world is to be encouraged.

The Conference on Disarmament, as the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum of the international community, has an even greater role to play in the post-cold-war era. Most, if not all, of the concerns raised in the women's message are currently under intensive consideration in the Conference, which has started its work in 1993 expeditiously and with vigour. It is the hope of my Group that the women's NGOs as well as other non-governmental organizations, will continue to remain active proponents of effective disarmament measures that will strengthen peace and security, and, in short, will help to make the world a safer place to live in.

The PRESIDENT: I thank Ambassador Wagenmakers as coordinator of the Western Group for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to me and to my predecessor. I now give the floor to the coordinator of the Group of East European and Other States, Ambassador Batsanov of the Russian Federation.

Mr. BATSANOV (Russian Federation) (translated from Russian): First of all, Mr. President, allow me also on behalf of my delegation to express my satisfaction at your taking up the post of President of the Conference on

Disarmament, as well as my conviction that you will successfully guide our work. I should also like to express appreciation to your predecessors in the Chair for their major contributions to our work.

I shall not conceal that it is agreeable to me to express gratitude on behalf of our group to the Women's Gathering for their very important message to the Conference on Disarmament. Allow me also to take this opportunity, although a little late, to congratulate all women present in this room on the International Women's Day, 8 March. Our group believes that the active participation of women in the solution of the task of strengthening peace and international security, the development of the disarmament process, the creation of reliable barriers to the spread of weapons of mass destruction and the reduction of the military threat as a whole is one of the most important factors for ensuring the progress of the world community in this direction. The women of the world - and this is very valuable - bring to the extremely complex technical sphere of disarmament their intrinsic sensibility and the sincere desire to achieve real results for the purpose of creating a safer world. We are very appreciative of a striking element in the women's message to the Conference on Disarmament - the deep interest of the women's movement in the achievement of new agreements which will make a further contribution to disarmament and the continuous reduction of military potentials. Allow me in conclusion to express the hope that the message we have just heard will serve as an additional stimulus for stepping up the efforts of the Conference on

Disarmament in tackling the tasks before us and strengthening the links between the Conference and the prestigious social movements in favour of disarmament.

The PRESIDENT: I thank Ambassador Batsanov as coordinator of the Group of East European and Other States for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to me and to my predecessors. I now give the floor to the representative of China, Mr. Hu.

Mr. HU (China) (translated from Chinese): Mr. President, first of all the Chinese delegation wishes to congratulate you on taking up the presidency of the CD. We would also like to express our thanks to your predecessor, the distinguished representative of Bulgaria, for his valuable contributions.

Today, soon after the 8 March International Women's Day was observed, a number of representatives from international women's organizations are present here to observe our proceedings. The Chinese delegation wishes to welcome them.

Arms control and disarmament are major issues which have a bearing on peace, security and development for people all over the world. Today, when the world situation has undergone enormous changes, international disarmament efforts have achieved some success, though at the same time there are still serious and numerous challenges ahead. It goes without saying that future work in the field of disarmament will be even more important and arduous. Therefore, it will need all the more the common efforts of the international community, including those of women throughout the world.

Many international and national NGOs, including women's organizations, have made many contributions in this regard. The Chinese delegation appreciates these efforts and contributions and would also like to take this opportunity to extend our festive greetings to women colleagues in all delegations, ladies observing our proceedings and women staff members of the secretariat.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of China for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the presidency. I now give the floor to Ambassador Norberg of Sweden.

Mr. NORBERG (Sweden): Mr. President, first let me congratulate you upon the assumption of the office as President of this Conference. As usual, you can count on the full cooperation of my delegation. I have asked for the floor in order to add my voice to previous speakers in connection with the commemoration of International Women's Day. As is well known, many women, not least from my own country, have made significant contributions to the disarmament process. Names like Alva Myrdal, Inga Thorsson and Maj Britt Theorin are well known in this context and I am confident that the contribution by women in this disarmament process will be of the same importance also in the future.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Ambassador of Sweden for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair and to previous Chairs.

We shall now proceed with our regular business for today. I have on my list of speakers the representatives of Argentina, Zimbabwe, the Russian Federation, Poland, Sweden, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, France and Japan. I now give the floor to the representative of Argentina, Ambassador Lanús.

Mr. LANUS (Argentina) (translated from Spanish): It is with genuine satisfaction that I am taking the floor in this plenary today under the presidency of Canada. Not only because it is you, Ambassador Shannon, who are carrying out this great responsibility, but also because your presence on the podium of this historic room enables us to pay a well-deserved tribute to your country, Canada, which found a way to distinguish itself during the difficult years of the cold war in disarmament and security forums by a more ambitious and less restricted vision of what could be done in this delicate field of international life.

Today I would like to address an item that is of special importance for the Argentine Republic: transparency in armaments and in particular the process which has as one of its principal instruments the Register of transfers of conventional weapons. Argentina has been stressing the need to adapt and update the agenda of this and other bodies with competence in disarmament matters. Today's topic will allow me to expand on some of the ideas which have led my Government to take this position.

Last year we welcomed the addition to the annual programme of work of the CD of item 9, dealing with this very topic of transparency in armaments. As we all know, 1992 found us all embarked on the demanding task of concluding the convention on chemical weapons, which undoubtedly prevented us from giving this item all the attention it deserves. The informal deliberations we carried out under the skilful guidance of Ambassador Mounir Zahran of Egypt were useful in making us aware of the magnitude and the diversity of approaches to this item that exist in the Conference. This was inevitable if we recall that resolution 46/36 L from which this whole process stems in the final analysis is a text which from the doctrinal viewpoint defines a number of facets on which we will have to work. These include aspects ranging from the definition of what constitutes an "excessive and destabilizing accumulation of arms" to practical measures to increase openness and transparency related to transfers of high technology with military applications without overlooking weapons of mass destruction.

The task ahead, as can be seen, is not easy. However, we cannot delay the commencement of practical action any longer. We welcome the prompt establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on the item. The informal structure which we had last year was perhaps an indispensable but not sufficient step to comply with the request which the General Assembly addressed to us and which the CD, as an autonomous body, endorsed. The task must start by setting up a clear programme of work, derived from the mandate that has been conferred on the Committee. The two main avenues proposed are respectively the one on

"interrelated aspects of the excessive and destabilizing accumulation of arms, including military holdings and procurement through national production", on the one hand, and on the other, the subject of "transfers of high technology with military applications and weapons of mass destruction, in accordance with existing legal instruments". On both of these subjects we will have to elaborate practical measures to increase openness and transparency. In the view of the Argentine delegation, we must approach this mandate in a practical frame of mind, seeking to define in terms of concrete measures the main headings proposed in resolution 46/36 L. As a technical and negotiating body it falls to the CD to flesh out these ideas.

We will now propose some possible alternatives. First, excessive and destabilizing accumulation; weapons of mass destruction. The topic undoubtedly falls within the very origin of this subject and the register of arms transfers. Naturally, any attempt to define what would be "excessive" or "destabilizing" in the military field is a complex task. However, I would venture to say that this makes us run the risk of becoming ensnared in an endless rhetorical tangle.

Obviously these notions subsume concepts that are central to State policy, such as the inherent right of individual or collective self-defence, or that of due account being taken of regional circumstances, which are constantly changing. It is because of this that we feel that the treatment of the chapter on the accumulation of arms should not lead us to a debate which is limited to the theoretical plane. At the same time, we must remember that in just a few more months the second group of government experts responsible for the analysis of the operation of the Register of arms will have to consider its expansion, precisely through the inclusion of military holdings and procurement through national production. This group will undoubtedly have to look at matters of a terminological nature and try to provide practical answers, as was done by the panel that was so successfully led by the Ambassador of the Netherlands, Hendrik Wagenmakers. For the moment it is our view that the work of the Conference in this phase of our work cannot produce immediate results, in so far as it depends to a large extent on developments elsewhere, such as in the 1994 group and the conclusions on the operation of the Register in the present start-up phase.

Second, weapons of mass destruction and transfers of high technology with military applications. These are the subjects covered in paragraph 13 of resolution 46/36 L. Here, we believe, the ground is more promising for concrete work. Let us first address the question of what might be done in practice with weapons of mass destruction. Fortunately, the nuclear arms race has ended, at least in quantitative terms, and the almost self-sustained tendency to grow that arsenals displayed until recently has been reversed, as is proved by the Treaty for the elimination of intermediate-range missiles (INF), START I and II. We agree with those who consider that these treaties in themselves supply information on the level of existing stockpiles. This is inevitable since very precise thresholds for the different weapons systems are set by means of their provisions. Nevertheless, we think that an interesting practical contribution might be included here: the establishment of supplementary registers for the comparison of the information obtained from the implementation of the various treaties.

As is well known, because of their complexity and the costs involved in their implementation, these agreements often set targets for compliance which are staggered in time. To mention just one, the START II Treaty sets the year 2003 for its full implementation. The chemical weapons convention which we negotiated here stipulates a 10-year period for the destruction of existing stockpiles. Nevertheless, the implementation of these agreements of such importance for all can be delayed or be affected by circumstances as yet unforeseen. In this regard, a parallel register kept by the United Nations and, like the present register of conventional weapons, supplied with information by interested States, would be a practical instrument for transparency and openness. It would be a kind of logbook which would tell us exactly what stage we have reached and how far we have yet to go. Such a register would also have the advantage of being voluntary and composed of information which is essentially publicly available. No-one would be required to provide more information than that contained in public commitments. It could be argued that if the information is publicly available there would be no need to create this parallel register. To this objection we would answer very simply: in the first place this argument could have been raised to discredit the Register of Conventional Arms, and yet we all regard it as a useful and necessary instrument. Secondly, it is one thing to say that information is publicly obtained and a very different thing to have access to it in a rapid and organized way. In this dilemma lies the difference between transparency as an abstract goal and the effective availability of the information. Fragmented, partial and outdated information, however public it may be, is not transparent. We believe that the Conference could easily set out certain guidelines for the compilation of this register on the status of existing arsenals of weapons of mass destruction.

Another concrete idea which the Conference might perhaps start looking at would be the elaboration of a code of conduct on conventional arms transfers. The item is complex and also linked to the efforts that have been made under resolution 46/36 H on illicit trade. Work in this area could start in the first place with an analysis of national policies with regard to transfers. As is well known, the Register of Conventional Arms will include existing information on relevant national legislation and procedures (para. 18 of resolution 46/36 L). Once we are in possession of a sufficient quantity of information - and it is clear that many countries are responding positively to this request from the General Assembly - a comparative analysis of the legislation could be carried out in order to determine possible common and convergent areas, with a view to the elaboration and later the adoption of universal criteria.

There is another specific point on which the Conference could make a positive contribution. The question of transfers of high technology with military applications is undoubtedly one of the indispensable components of the security agenda for the coming years. As we mentioned at the beginning of our reflections on excessive and destabilizing accumulations, I think we should also make an effort to avoid a repetition of highly familiar exchanges. No-one now challenges certain premises: that technology in itself is neutral, that there is in principle a right to have access to high technology which is necessary for development, and that this should be governed by well-defined

rules in order to avoid a situation where, under the justification of technological advances for civilian purposes, for example, proliferaters acquire the means to shorten the process leading to weapons of mass destruction. On all these ideas much has been said and written. Now is the time for the less attractive and tougher task of shaping the principles into practical means as all of us without exception indicated when we agreed the terms of resolution 46/36 L. The existing regimes applicable to different fields (nuclear, chemical, biological and missiles) are a first important link. Each country has adopted a specific position on these in accordance with its own perceptions. As far as

Argentina is concerned, in the post-cold-war world they are useful tools for the preservation of stability. However, we are convinced that we can aspire to more. In this connection the Conference could get down to the task of identifying possible areas for harmonization between what is already in place (the Australia Group, the MTCR, the chemical weapons Convention, the Nuclear Suppliers' Group) and national legislations, seeking to bear in mind the interests of as many States as possible in the area of access to technology and defining machinery which does not call into question the principle of preventing the proliferation of weapons with a mass destruction capability. For this exercise there is a need to coordinate the similar initiatives from various directions, for instance the consultations on non-proliferation being carried out by Ambassador Marín Bosch of Mexico, or the work in the United Nations Disarmament Commission.

We have attempted today to present some ideas so as to give specific content to the work of the Ad Hoc Committee which on item 9 of our agenda has been established without having yet been able to begin it substantive work. For the Argentine Republic, transparency in armaments is an essential prerequisite for the shaping of a stable and equitable international order. In this context, and under the auspices of the Office for Disarmament Affairs of the United Nations, the regional seminar on the register of transfers of conventional arms is being held in Buenos Aires. Technical experts, military officers and diplomats from many countries of the American continent, from north to south, have met in the capital of my country to facilitate the task of participating in the Register. In this sense, this is an exercise which is essentially technical. However, I should like to emphasize that while the arrangements for filling in forms for the Register are technical matters, the profound meaning of its existence is not. Hence we deem it essential for the necessary support to be lent to the Register from every region so that this time the effort is really representative and global in scope. The meeting in Buenos Aires aims at fulfilling that objective within the American context.

Transparency, as has been said, is not an end in itself. It is simply an instrument which helps to avoid misunderstandings and the accumulation of misjudgements as to the intentions of States. Recent history proves that ambiguity and confusion in military matters pave the way which sooner or later leads to suspicion, threats, risk and often war.

The PRESIDENT: I wish to thank Ambassador Lanús for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to me and to my country. I now give the floor to the representative of Zimbabwe, Ambassador Jokonya.

Mr. JOKONYA (Zimbabwe): Mr. President, allow me, first of all, to express my profound gratitude and my delegation's sense of privilege at being accorded the opportunity to address today's plenary session of the Conference on Disarmament. At the same time, I would like to avail myself of this opportunity to congratulate you upon your assumption of the presidency of the Conference on

Disarmament. Your known sterling qualities are a sure guarantee that under your stewardship, significant progress will be realised within this august body.

The waves buffeting the international political landscape today are pregnant with both opportunities and challenges. The demise of the cold war and the consequent collapse of the East-West divide in international politics has upset the logical presuppositions upon which the politics of that era were based. We have no choice but to adapt, albeit with a sense of purpose and direction, to the fledgling order. Failure to take cognisance of these epoch-making shifts would reduce our deliberations into meaningless parallel monologues. According to a famous Stoic dictum, Volentem fata ducunt, Nolentem trahunt - "he who is willing, the fates guide; he who resists, the fates drag along". Zimbabwe is willing to play its part in the current attempts to chart a new path in the search for stability on the world scene.

It is in this context that in my brief statement today I intend to focus specifically on the expansion of the membership of the Conference on Disarmament. As you all know, Zimbabwe made a formal submission for membership to the Conference on 28 August 1986, a few months after establishing our presence here in Geneva. That was a vote of confidence in the work of the Conference and at the same time an explicit policy statement on our commitment to the pursuance of global security and peace.

The issues on the agenda of the Conference affect and permeate all aspects of inter-State relations. Regional political convulsions and ethnic conflicts that have become part of the post-cold-war scenario caution us against viewing the question of disarmament in isolation from socio-economic or socio-political realities. It has to be acknowledged that disarmament is a key element of our collective endeavours to strengthen international peace and security. Consequently, it is of paramount importance that all States be fully engaged in the process of disarmament. This is a necessary and inevitable development that, in the long term, will enhance the work and the relevance of the Conference, since disarmament and arms control relate to the security interests of all States - small and large alike.

We do not subscribe to the argument that an expansion of the membership will encumber the negotiating process. Negotiating efficiency should not be viewed solely in terms of the agreement reached on paper, but also in the context of the implementation stage. An agreement or convention negotiated by all the interested parties would stand a better chance of endorsement at the national, regional and international level. Globalization of the process of arms control and disarmament is the only way forward that would guarantee success in mankind's quest for a world free of weapons of mass destruction and other apocalyptic military threats.

The current CD membership of 38 does not reflect today's political realities as evidenced by the increasing number of countries expressing their interest in joining as full-fledged members. These aspirations should not be frustrated and the Conference has to respond to them expeditiously. The politics of exclusion based on narrow national interests might eventually dent the otherwise positive image of the CD.

Since Zimbabwe joined the family of nations in 1980, she has unflinchingly, at both the regional and international level, been continuously associated with international efforts to promote and strengthen global peace and security. Zimbabwe acceded to the non-proliferation Treaty early last year, and is contributing in a number of peacekeeping efforts under the aegis of the United Nations - in Angola, in Rwanda and in Somalia. It is in this spirit that Zimbabwe will host a third meeting of experts to examine the modalities and the elements for the preparation of a convention or treaty on the denuclearization of Africa from 5 to 8 April this year.

It is our hope that deliberations on the expansion of the membership of the Conference under the able guidance of His Excellency Ambassador O'Sullivan of Australia will lead to a balanced and satisfactory outcome.

In conclusion, I would like to commend the Conference on Disarmament for the successful conclusion of the chemical weapons Convention, and it is partly this historical success that today fuels us in our quest for membership.

The PRESIDENT: I thank Ambassador Jokonya of Zimbabwe for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair, and I now give the floor to the representative of the Russian Federation, Ambassador Batsanov.

Mr. BATSANOV (Russian Federation) (translated from Russian): A month and a half ago, in this room, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Russia G. Berdennikov dwelt in general terms on our country's approach to the issue of transparency in armaments. As he pointed out, we view transparency in armaments as an important confidence-building measure, a means to strengthen security and remove mutual concerns and misunderstandings, and in that regard we intend to participate actively in discussing the transparency problem here in the Conference on Disarmament. This is all the more important because the Conference, along with the United Nations General Assembly, is a major forum for discussing the issue of transparency. This is borne out first of all by the fact that the Conference has broad representation of the main suppliers and producers of arms as well as their recipients, and secondly, by the presence here of the required expertise. Against this background, we believe the discussion of the transparency issue in the Conference on Disarmament should become essentially a standing item.

Today, I would like to set out in greater detail our approach to the issues of transparency and to outline our view of their prospective consideration in the Conference. This issue has been under discussion in the United Nations and in other forums for a number of years. Although extensive work has been carried out during this period - General Assembly resolutions have been adopted on the subject, an experts' report on the issue of

(Mr. Batsanov, Russian Federation)

transparency in arms supplies has been prepared, and finally the Register has been developed - we must not fail to recognize that in this area, we are just at the beginning of our work. Statements made during both the previous and the current sessions have already illustrated differences in the approaches to the issues of transparency in armaments by member States of the Conference, sometimes major ones. We are not inclined to dramatize this circumstance; these differences are in our view perfectly natural. After all, on the one hand this concerns a highly sensitive area directly related to countries' national security interests. On the other hand, the solution to the problem of transparency turns on a difficulty, so to speak, of a technical nature: differences in national legislation, difficulties which result from the fact that the statistical methods and estimates existing in various countries are not comparable or not sufficiently comparable. However, all these problems should not overshadow what is most important - our common readiness to discuss transparency issues, to look for points of convergence, as well as our common support of General Assembly resolution 46/36 L. Taking the above into account, we are in favour of a phased and sequential expansion of the area of transparency in armaments on an agreed basis which does not jeopardize the security of States.

I should say that for a whole host of reasons it is not easy for Russia to move forward on the path of transparency, bearing in mind the closed nature of our society in the past and the realities of the present day. I would like to note that some months ago Russia made public for the first time general data on exports of arms from the USSR for 1991 both in value and in volume terms - in other words it did what the Soviet Union had not done for over 60 years, since the time when it presented data on Soviet armed forces to the League of Nations for the last time. Now we are completing the preparation of data for the United Nations Register, which we consider at this stage as a basis for resolving transparency issues. We support the idea of expanding and improving the Register in the light of experience with its operation, and including in it additional mutually agreed categories of arms. I would also like to inform you of the positive attitude of the Russian delegation to the proposals on joint efforts in support of the Register put forward at the last plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament by Ambassador S. Ledogar.

One of the key items on the agenda of our Ad Hoc Committee on this topic is the issue of interrelated aspects of the excessive and destabilizing accumulation of arms, including military holdings and procurement through national production. In our view, the prospects for achieving real results in this area may become clear in a year or two, inter alia once States submit relevant information on a voluntary basis. It would be desirable in this context to consider here at the Conference first and foremost such practical issues as fact-finding relating to the excessive accumulation of arms, illicit arms transfers and also the comparability of statistics and criteria of nationality of arms production and storage facilities as a preliminary step before the mandatory extension of transparency measures to the area of military holdings and procurement through national production. There is also a need for a detailed and comprehensive discussion of issues related to transparency measures in the area of research and development, arms storage

conditions and military budgets. Such an approach might provide a good basis for further development and improvement of the Register.

A few words on transparency issues with respect to transfers of high technology with military applications, and also on weapons of mass destruction. We agree with the distinguished representative of Japan, Mr. Tanaka, that consideration of this question is important, though it is a very complicated and delicate issue since it involves "strategic, technical and political questions and sometimes [touches] upon quite sensitive areas affecting national security and economic interests". It is precisely for this reason that we are in favour of thorough and comprehensive consideration of this subject, for which the required expertise must be brought in. The Conference on Disarmament might well also become a forum for considering national regulations and legislation governing the activities of participants in the relevant control regimes, and also comparing export control procedures.

The problem of extending transparency to weapons of mass destruction also requires a well-considered approach. Of course, it would be wrong to place this very dangerous area of disarmament outside the framework of openness, limiting openness to conventional armaments, all the more so as the corresponding United Nations General Assembly resolution calls upon us to discuss transparency with respect to weapons of mass destruction. However, at a time when the Register approved by the United Nations has not even come into operation, hasty actions and simplified solutions in this respect would in our opinion be premature. The question of how to approach the problem of subjecting weapons of mass destruction to transparency measures doubtless deserves the most serious discussion right now, specifically within the framework of the Conference of Disarmament. Obviously, the mechanical inclusion of weapons of mass destruction in the Register of Conventional Arms is hardly possible because, while the transfer of conventional weapons in principle does not run counter to international legal norms, the transfer of weapons of mass destruction and the corresponding technologies is prohibited by the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Convention on biological weapons and the recently agreed Convention on chemical weapons. For that reason we support the view contained in the French working paper circulated at the previous session (CD/TIA/WP.2 of 28 July 1992) that measures to increase transparency in the area of weapons of mass destruction should form a separate procedure rather than supplementing the registration of data on arms deliveries. In this respect transparency in respect of weapons of mass destruction could probably be considered within the context of the issue of including States' armed forces and armaments as a whole into the scope of transparency measures. It is also essential to point out - and not just to point out, but also to bear in mind - that some transparency with respect to weapons of mass destruction is already provided for under existing bilateral and multilateral treaties such as START II, the Convention on chemical weapons, etc. In order to increase transparency in the field of nuclear disarmament it might already be possible to reach agreement on the exchange of data on the quantities of fissionable materials released as a result of the destruction of nuclear weapons following reductions, and on their storage facilities.

In our view it is also important to remember that the scope for further extending openness in the field of weapons of mass destruction and high technology will to a great extent depend on the stability and universality of the non-proliferation regimes concerned, particularly in the nuclear area. In the meantime, we are seriously concerned by the fact that accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons is sometimes hedged about with additional conditions, and presented as a sort of "concession" to the international community for which it should pay a price. The Russian Federation believes that such an approach should receive an appropriate reaction on the part of the United Nations in the spirit of the decisions adopted during the Security Council meeting with the participation of senior State leaders in January 1992.

Of still greater concern to us was the statement made by the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on 12 March 1993 concerning its intention to withdraw from the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. As one of the depositaries of this Treaty, which in turn is a key document designed to ensure international peace and security in the nuclear age, the Russian Federation cannot remain indifferent to any step by any party which undermines the international nuclear-weapon non-proliferation regime. We would like to be sure that Pyongyang will very seriously weigh the consequences of its actions and that the above-mentioned decision taken by the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will be reconsidered. We are convinced that unconditional compliance with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons is in the interests of the North Korean side itself first of all, and in the interests of stability and security on the Korean peninsula.

Mr. DEMBINSKI (Poland): Mr. President, I should like to congratulate you warmly on the assumption of the Conference's presidency which, as it happens, will be an extended one, ensuring continuity between the first and second parts of the CD session this year. I am confident that given your skill, expertise and your country's well-known dedication to disarmament, the business of the Conference on Disarmament is in good hands. You will have my delegation's unfailing support and cooperation in the discharge of your duties. At the same time, I should like to put on record our appreciation of the efficient guidance which the outgoing President, Mr. Deyanov of Bulgaria, provided to the CD at the crucial moment of its work.

It is my intention to address briefly the issue of transparency in armaments, including the interrelated question of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. These issues - in our view - constitute a high-priority item of our agenda this year. Our tasks in this regard are set out in no uncertain terms in General Assembly resolution 46/36 L. We are expected to address as soon as possible and elaborate universal and non-discriminatory practical means to increase openness and transparency in military matters.

Let me state at the outset that my delegation fully shares the sense of disappointment transpiring from some of the previous interventions over the apparent inability of the Conference on Disarmament and its subsidiary bodies thus far to proceed to a structured and result-oriented consideration of the

item. The Ad Hoc Committee cannot afford to lose any more time if the Conference is to heed the General Assembly's request.

Poland attaches major importance to openness and transparency in armaments and in the military sphere in general. This goes also for the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. We strongly believe that a scrupulous pursuit of these objectives should prejudice neither the legitimate needs of self-defence nor the recognized principle of undiminished security of all States. The experience Poland and other CSCE participating States have of the practical application of principles and structures of cooperative security in Europe is to us an eloquent proof that openness in the military sphere is conducive to regional peace and security. It may be likewise conducive to enhanced security perceptions on a broader scale. I would say more - openness and transparency, including the United Nations Register, have confidence- and security-building potential that needs to be explored also in regions beyond this continent.

In our view, a conventional arms transfer register covering import and export data, the relevant information on military holdings, procurement through national production and the specific policies in that regard could well become the mainstay of a global confidence- and security-building measure. Obviously, the confidence-building impact of such a measure will be directly proportional to its scope, both substantive and geographical. Incomplete disclosure, or one limited to only some countries, would certainly fall far short of the expectations which the international community rightly associates with efforts to check excessive and destabilizing accumulations of arms, especially in conflict-prone areas of the world. It is for this reason that the Polish delegation gladly lends its support to the timely suggestions made by Ambassador Wagenmakers and Ambassador Ledogar that the CD members and non-member participants undertake - as the CSCE States have already undertaken - to submit register data to the United Nations Secretary-General by the set deadline of 30 April of this year.

My delegation also finds interesting the idea of mutual, informal exchange of such national submissions among delegations involved in the Conference on Disarmament. We, furthermore, believe that in so far as documents and ideas relevant to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms are concerned, it might be worthwhile for accounts of the United Nations-sponsored regional seminars on the subject, which are or will be hosted by Argentina, Italy, Japan and Poland, to be informally circulated by the secretariat for the information of this body.

In his intervention on 4 March, the distinguished representative of Ireland, a non-member participating State, referred to an interesting proposal for a code of conduct on arms transfers which his country made at the United Nations General Assembly last year. This idea should not be left unexamined by the Ad Hoc Committee. Nor, for that matter, should a similar and I believe relevant concept of a code of conduct in the field of security which Poland submitted to the Vienna CSCE Forum for Security Cooperation late

last year. While developed for the specific European context, some of the ideas of the draft code may well commend themselves to a broader community of nations.

Indeed, who can quarrel with such concepts of the draft which assert, for instance, that "the participating States recognize that security is indivisible and the security of every participating State is inseparably linked to that of all others"; that "while strengthening common security and stability, the participating States will ensure that the security of each of them is not adversely affected. No State will seek to strengthen its own security at the expense of others"; that "the participating States will keep the levels of their armed forces to the minimum commensurate with legitimate common or individual security needs within Europe and beyond"; and that "the participating States will follow a responsible approach to international arms transfers and will cooperate in strengthening multilateral non-proliferation regimes. Above all, they will prevent, through appropriate legislation and enforcement procedures, illegal arms transfers"?

My extensive quote of some of the relevant language of the draft code of conduct in the field of security has not been meant to tax the patience of the distinguished representatives around this table. The intention behind it was only to demonstrate that ideas abound and that momentum is gaining in the international community's search for effective and credible measures in the field of peace and international security. In the considered view of my delegation, the Conference on Disarmament should not miss this "window of opportunity" for its productive efforts in that respect. We must act without further delay.

The PRESIDENT: I thank Ambassador Dembinski of Poland for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Sweden, Ambassador Norberg.

Mr. NORBERG (Sweden): My intervention today will be wholly devoted to the question of a nuclear test ban. As is well known Sweden has since long worked for a ban on all nuclear tests. Therefore, it is with great satisfaction that my delegation has noted the early establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban during this session of the Conference. It should be recalled that the General Assembly of the United Nations last fall approved the resolution on a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty with a larger majority than ever. In the resolution all States are urged to seek to achieve the early discontinuance of all nuclear-test explosions for all time.

At present four of the five nuclear-weapon States are in practice observing a moratorium on nuclear testing. This moratorium creates a favourable climate for progress towards a comprehensive test ban. A prolongation of the moratoria as well as adherence to the moratorium by all nuclear-weapon States should vigorously contribute to maintain the momentum.

The world has been changing fast during the last few years. The same considerations are no longer valid and previous positions are being modified. My delegation has listened with great interest to the views expressed so far,

not least by the five nuclear-weapon States, at the meetings this year of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban. Even if positions have not yet been worked out in detail, it is our impression that, in the new international context, there is now a real chance to make progress towards a nuclear test ban.

At this juncture, it is extremely important that all delegations make an extra effort to reconsider old positions and try new ways to achieve a nuclear test ban. One of the main reasons for ascertaining a nuclear test ban, namely to halt the nuclear arms race among the present nuclear Powers, has possibly become less significant as the world is now in fact experiencing nuclear disarmament. Yet a halt to nuclear tests remains equally essential for other reasons, first and foremost as a means to halting the risk of nuclear proliferation. A total test ban would also eliminate possible environmental and health hazards connected with nuclear explosions.

Sweden in 1991 presented a draft comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty, contained in document CD/1089 of 31 July 1991. This proposal is still on the table. My delegation has concluded, however, that due to developments since the proposal was submitted, some modifications are necessary. As to the scope of a treaty, Sweden has concluded that a ban should be total and comprehensive, thus including also an outright prohibition of all peaceful nuclear explosions (PNEs). There are, in the view of the Swedish delegation, several good reasons for such an approach. First, all PNEs imply a problem since experience gained from them might be used in the development of nuclear weapons. Furthermore, it seems to my delegation that there are increasing doubts as to the possibility of using PNEs for any practical purpose, particularly taking into account the risks for the environment. My delegation would be interested to listen to views from other delegations on this matter and other aspects of our original proposal. Considerations of this nature should, therefore, cause us to strongly stress, in the preambular part of a treaty, the non-proliferation effects of a nuclear test ban and to include in the treaty a PNE prohibition.

Developments of the last few years would also seem to call for a review on the section of a test-ban treaty dealing with verification issues. It is clear to my delegation that a worldwide seismic network should constitute the core of a comprehensive system for verification of treaty compliance. It is important to further study also other methods than a seismic network. In the Swedish draft other methods of verification are also included, such as the surveillance of radionuclides in the atmosphere, the use of satellite data and on-site inspections. In the view of my delegation the Group of Scientific Experts could take on this task. However, also other ways of dealing with this task should be considered without delay.

A discussion is also called for concerning the institutional arrangements for verifying compliance with the treaty. The verification system of the chemical weapons Convention is a historic achievement and could, no doubt, give inspiration and new ideas for the verification of a CTB. Nevertheless, it is important to ask if, in the nuclear field, the best and most cost-effective solution really is to create a new specialized organization for verification. Perhaps we should first explore the possibilities to utilize the competence and experience gained by the International Atomic Energy Agency also for this purpose.

As pointed out by Sweden's Foreign Minister in her statement to the Conference last month, Sweden strongly believes that the present positive international atmosphere resulting from the end of the cold war and the conclusion of the START agreements and the chemical weapons Convention should be fully utilized in the negotiations aimed at completing a comprehensive test ban. In this context, we consider it of utmost importance that the current moratoria observed by nuclear Powers be extended in order to ensure a positive atmosphere.

Sir Michael WESTON (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland): Mr. President, I should like to begin by congratulating you on your assumption of the presidency of the Conference and to pledge to you the full support of the United Kingdom delegation. Once again, it gives me particular pleasure to see a representative of a fellow member of the Commonwealth presiding over our deliberations. Your wisdom and wide experience leave me with no doubt that you will take the task in your stride. I would also like to express my delegation's thanks to your predecessor whose period in office coincided with a particularly active period in the Conference's work.

I have asked for the floor to express the concern of the United Kingdom, as one of the three Depositary Governments of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of

Nuclear Weapons, at the decision of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, of which notification was given to the United Nations Security Council on 12 March, to announce its intention to withdraw from the Treaty. Following its refusal to allow the International Atomic Energy Agency's special inspections, this decision gives further cause to question the intentions of the North Korean Government.

As British Ministers have restated recently, the United Kingdom attaches the highest priority to preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons. We participate actively in international efforts to that end. The most important instrument of the non-proliferation regime is the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. As a co-depositary of the Treaty, we are working to secure its indefinite extension in 1995. We believe that universal accession to the Treaty, and full compliance with its obligations, are the best ways to guarantee nuclear non-proliferation. We view the North Korean decision with great concern and are consulting with others, both in New York and in Vienna. We strongly urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to reverse its decision and to fulfil all its obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the Safeguards Agreement. Meanwhile, it should be noted that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's obligations remain in force for three months after its official notification of withdrawal. These obligations include granting access to the two sites requested by the International Atomic Energy Agency in their resolution of 25 February.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the United Kingdom for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to Ambassador Ledogar of the United States of America.

Mr. LEDOGAR (United States of America): Mr. President, I join the other speakers this morning who have expressed congratulations on your ascendancy, confidence in your leadership capacities and a promise of their delegations' cooperation.

As a depositary State for the nuclear non-proliferation Treaty, I also would like to place on the record of this forum the great concern and disappointment of my Government at the announced intention of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to withdraw from the non-proliferation Treaty. The reasons given by the North Koreans for withdrawal do not appear to meet the "supreme national interest" criteria of the NPT, and their actions can only contribute to increased tensions and insecurity in the region. Their actions also undermine the value of the NPT for all the other parties. The United States Government, like the United Kingdom Government, notes the legal obligation of the North Korean Government to abide by all its commitments and obligations under the NPT and the IAEA safeguards regime for three months following its notification of intention to withdraw. We fully expect DPRK compliance with these obligations. The United

States also joins the many calls issued in recent days, including here today, for the DPRK to reconsider its actions, to ruminate upon the consequences, to retract its announcement, and to fulfil responsibly its obligations to its fellow parties under the terms of the Treaty.

The PRESIDENT: I thank Ambassador Ledogar of the United States for his statement and also for his kind words of support to me. The next speaker on my list is Ambassador Errera of France.

Mr. ERRERA (France) (translated from French): Let me convey to you, Sir, as you take up the office of President of our Conference, how happy my delegation is to see you conducting our work. First of all because you are a friend with whom we have constant dialogue and implicit trust, a colleague whose breadth of vision, competence and keen judgement are acknowledged by all. Next because Canada is bound to France by so many historical, political, cultural, linguistic ties, finally because, as everyone knows, Canada for many years now has been making a major contribution to the cause of disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. You are occupying the Chair of our Conference at a critical point for our future. You may be assured not only of our wholehearted wishes for success but also, naturally, of our full support. I also take this opportunity to pay tribute to the representative of Bulgaria, who preceded you with skill and authority in this task.

As soon as the Democratic People's Republic of Korea announced its withdrawal from the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the French Government strongly condemned this grave and unprecedented decision, a decision that undermines the non-proliferation regime as a whole. The resulting situation prompts us to call to mind the following facts. In

(Mr. Errera, France)

pursuance of article X of the NPT, a party may withdraw from the Treaty only if extraordinary events related to the subject-matter of the Treaty have jeopardized the supreme interests of its country. Such a withdrawal is subject to its being notified by the State concerned to all the other parties and the Security Council, with three months' notice. During that three-month period the State remains a party to the Treaty. Until that period has come to an end, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is therefore bound to fulfil its obligations, and hence to apply its safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). These safeguards, let us remember, apply to all source or special fissionable material in all peaceful nuclear activities within the territory of the State. On 25 February last, the decision of the Director General of IAEA to ask the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to accept an inspection of two facilities in that country, in pursuance of the safeguards agreement that it has concluded, that decision was based on a detailed report providing conclusive evidence, that decision was backed up by a resolution of the Board of Governors, representing the international community, that decision was adopted by consensus. This resolution also gave the North Korean Government one month to comply with its obligations. This very day, the Board of Governors of

IAEA, which is holding a special meeting, will be informed of the most recent developments by the Director General of the Agency. This further meeting offers North Korea another change to comply with the Agency's request.

For these reasons, France joins the many countries that have urged the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to reverse its decision to withdraw from the NPT and to allow the full application of the safeguards agreement and to respond within the deadline to the requests for additional information and access to the two sites that were mentioned in the Board of Governors resolution of 25 February. This matter is now the subject of consultations in the United Nations Security Council. I would like to recall that on 31 January 1992, the Security Council, meeting at the level of heads of State and Government underlined "the need for all Member States to fulfil their obligations in relation to arms control and disarmament and prevent the proliferation in all forms of weapons of mass destruction". The Council also stated that "the proliferation of all weapons of mass destruction constitutes a threat to international peace and security".

Several States this very morning have thought it appropriate to bring this question up before the Conference on Disarmament, which is the international community's sole negotiating forum on disarmament, and this is because the entire international community feels concerned. As was recalled in the report on our Conference adopted by consensus on the subject of the "New dimensions of arms regulation and disarmament in the post-cold-war era", the important report which the United Nations Secretary-General had submitted to us in New York, this report said that disarmament "as a key element in pursuit of overall international security ... includes more and more clearly the need, recognized by all, to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons, other weapons of mass destruction, as well as their delivery system". France supports this idea, which inspired its own disarmament plan of 1991.

Let there be no misunderstanding. The efforts being carried out by the international community at the present time for nuclear disarmament could be jeopardized if attacks were made on the non-proliferation regime.

The PRESIDENT: I wish to thank Ambassador Errera of France for his statement and for his kind words of support for me and for my country. I understand that the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Mr. Tchoé Il, has asked for the floor.

Mr. TCHOE (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) (translated from French): First of all, Mr. President, allow me to extend to you our congratulations at seeing you presiding over our work at a crucial time. I have asked for the floor to take up briefly the issue that has just been mentioned by you and by some of the delegations present here.

First and foremost, I would like to tell you about the relations between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the NPT. As you well know, six inspections took place in respect of ourselves last year. During this period, we showed the inspectors everything, all our sincerity and all the facilities pertaining to the nuclear issue. We even showed them facilities the list of which did not appear in the report supplied by us to the International Atomic Energy Agency. But certain individuals from the Agency suggested seeing military sites which have nothing to do with the nuclear issue using information provided by a third country imposing upon us unfair ad hoc inspections. It is well known that this is not in conformity with the NPT statutes. We are convinced that the NPT should maintain the autonomy and impartiality inherent in it. All countries have the right to self-determination and to have defence forces. As you know well, my country is now in a very serious situation as a result of the large-scale "Team Spirit" military exercises mobilizing vast quantities of conventional and nuclear arms against our Republic. At a time when the cold war is over, as they say, there is no excuse for this type of manoeuvre against the peace and disarmament policy of a small independent country. Given the exceptionally serious situation which threatens to jeopardize the supreme interests of the country, my Government cannot fail to take the necessary measures. In view of the issue relating to the withdrawal of my country from the NPT in this Conference, we would like to ask the secretariat of the Conference on Disarmament to circulate to all delegations of the Conference the statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs issued on the 12th of this month, as an official document of the Conference, so that all delegations can understand our position, our reason for withdrawal from the NPT. It is up to you to decide where the cause of the fundamental danger on the Korean peninsula lies.

The PRESIDENT: I wish to thank the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for his statement and for his remarks to the Chair. I have been asked for the floor by the representative of the Netherlands, Ambassador Wagenmakers.

Mr. WAGENMAKERS (Netherlands): I am taking the floor once more on behalf of the Western Group of the Conference on Disarmament to put on record our great concern about the action of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in announcing on 12 March that it would withdraw from the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). This is a serious step which puts stability and security in East Asia at risk, especially the Korean peninsula, and which runs counter to efforts for a comprehensive and universal application of the NPT.

We believe strongly that the NPT serves the interest of the international community. It is the most widely supported arms control treaty in existence and has been remarkably successful in preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons. We consider that the decision of the DPRK to withdraw from the NPT is a challenge to the non-proliferation efforts under the NPT, will have grave repercussions and would raise serious questions in many quarters about its nuclear ambitions. On behalf of the Western Group of States I call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea not to retreat into isolation.

More broadly than the serious and worrying effects of this decision by the DPRK on stability in its immediate neighbourhood, multilateral non-proliferation assurances, which are given binding force in the NPT, lie at the core of international security. Adherence to the multilateral non-proliferation commitments is an important test of responsible international citizenship which nations consider carefully and seriously. To repudiate such commitments is a very grave step, justified only by reference to extraordinary events. This is the principle spelt out in article 10 of the NPT. The right to withdraw is not unlimited and the evaluation of the existence of extraordinary events must be made in good faith and cannot be left solely to the arbitrary judgements of the withdrawing State. Furthermore, whatever decision is taken on the right to withdraw in the present case, it must be pointed out that within a period of three months after the notification of the withdrawal, the withdrawing State must fully abide by the obligations stemming from the NPT. In consequence, the DPRK should comply with the resolution of the Board of Governors of IAEA of 25 February 1993.

The Western Group of States in the CD strongly urges the Government of the DBRK to reverse forthwith its notice to withdraw from the NPT.

Mr. NEAGU (Romania): I asked for the floor in order to join other speakers who expressed concern with respect to the announcement made last week by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that it intends to withdraw from the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, but before doing so, allow me, Sir, to congratulate you on taking up the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament and assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation in carrying out your responsibilities. I wish you every success in this regard. I would also like to express our gratitude to your predecessors, Ambassador Amorim of Brazil and Minister Plenipotentiary Deyanov of Bulgaria, for their valuable contribution and for the excellent manner in which they have guided the work of the Conference.

(Mr. Neagu, Romania)

Romania deplores this action by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea which comes at a time important efforts are made to strengthen non-proliferation and new States adhere to the NPT. As my delegation stated many times in the recent past, Romania attaches particular importance to, and fully supports, the non-proliferation Treaty, which is indeed a solid basis for curbing nuclear proliferation and a fundamental pillar of the non-proliferation regime. Therefore, universal adherence to this Treaty, the assurance of the efficiency of its legal regime and, consequently, the indefinite and unconditional extension of the NPT at the 1995 review conference are essential.

My Government emphasizes once again the vital role in the implementation of the Treaty of strict compliance with and carrying out of the safeguards agreements concluded by States parties with IAEA. The Agency's inspections - be they of a routine or of a special nature - are absolutely indispensable as a means of verifying compliance with the obligations under the Treaty. This is a principled standpoint which was clearly expressed at the 1990 NPT review conference, in the framework of the IAEA General Conference and Board of Governors and, last January, in this Conference. The Romanian basic standpoint does not refer to any particular country. It aims at strengthening the non-proliferation and safeguards regimes as a cornerstone of the international security system. For all these reasons we call upon the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to reconsider its 12 March statement and to fulfil its responsibilities under the NPT and the IAEA safeguards agreement.

The PRESIDENT: I thank Ambassador Neagu for his statement and for the kind words addressed to me and to my predecessors. I now give the floor to Ambassador Park of the Republic of Korea.

Mr. PARK (Republic of Korea): Mr. President, as this is the first occasion that I am taking the floor at the current session, let me add my own words of congratulation to those words you have received since your assumption of the presidency. I am particularly pleased to see you, Sir, in whose great country I had the honour of serving as the Korean Ambassador in the past, chairing the Conference on Disarmament, as your reputation for leadership, integrity and competence is widely known. I am sure that the Conference on Disarmament will benefit from your able guidance. I also take this occasion to express our thanks to the outgoing President, the distinguished representative of Bulgaria, for his eminent leadership during his presidency, and to Ambassador Berasategui, Secretary-General of the CD, for his untiring efforts and many contributions on behalf of the CD.

Like many others in this chamber, the North Korean announcement of 12 March to withdraw from the NPT disappointed and surprised us. Today, having listened attentively to the statements of the distinguished Ambassadors of the Netherlands, Canada, the United States, Romania, France and the United Kingdom, I can only say that Korea fully shares their concerns and the rising concerns of the international community on this matter. I, as a representative of the country that has been exposed to great danger as a

(Mr. Park, Republic of Korea)

result of North Korea's decision, am grateful to the members of the Conference for the urgent attention that they are giving this matter.

The North Korean nuclear issue has now emerged from the regional to the global level. By abandoning the NPT, North Korea has challenged the worldwide nuclear non-proliferation system and has gone against the earnest wishes of the global community for a nuclear-free world. The North Korean rejection of the NPT only serves to deepen suspicions about their nuclear weapons project.

As you may recall, IAEA, at its Governing Council in February, set a 25 March deadline for the inspection of two sites that IAEA analysts suspect may be processing nuclear fuels. Instead of complying with the resolution adopted by the Board of Governors of IAEA, North Korea has decided to withdraw from the NPT, declaring a semi-state of war, and placing its military on a war footing. Today IAEA is meeting in emergency session to deal with the dangerous situation created by North Korea's irresponsible decision.

With respect to the excuses which North Korea has offered to justify its deed, I would like to set the record straight before the Conference. The excuse that North Korea has presented to justify its withdrawal from the NPT is that the Korea-United States "Team Spirit" exercises pose a nuclear threat to North Korea, and further that some officials of the IAEA secretariat are biased in their dealings with the North.

The annual "Team Spirit" exercises, conducted since 1976 - and I emphasize, since 1976 - are of a purely defensive nature. They employ a minimum level of conventional weapons and furthermore, the Republic of Korea has extended a standing invitation to all nations, including the DPRK, to observe this exercise. North Korea has opted to reject this offer, and has distorted the nature of the exercise for propaganda purposes. Incidentally, I would like to inform the Conference that the field training of the "Team Spirit '93" which has been under way for 10 days came to a close today.

In addition, North Korea's allegations with respect to the IAEA secretariat do not correctly reflect the efforts of IAEA inspectors to verify North Korea's initial report and to increase the transparency of North Korea's nuclear programme. Under the NPT, North Korea is under a legal obligation to allow IAEA inspectors into its nuclear waste sites. By examining the North Korean reactors and waste, they wanted to clear up the discrepancy that exists between what Pyongyang reported to IAEA about the operation of its reactors, and what the IAEA experts discovered in recent inspections. We believe that the secretariat's request for its inspection of two suspected sites is perfectly justified.

DPRK's move has already had a detrimental effect on inter-Korean relations. The achievements that have been made through difficult dialogues in recent years are in jeopardy. Tensions are running high. You may recall that last March, my Northern counterpart Ambassador Ri Tcheul and I jointly signed a letter asking the Secretary-General of the CD to distribute the texts of the South-North accords as official CD documents. One crucial provision in

the accord binds both South and North Korea to refrain from going nuclear. Of course, the raison d'etre of the accord was the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. The Republic of Korea has repeatedly made it clear that opening up the entire Korean peninsula to nuclear inspections would reassure all Koreans, as well as the international community, that the nuclear threat on the Korean peninsula has been vanquished. This would open the way to wider political and economic ties between the DPRK and the rest of the world.

It is hard to accept that North Korea has chosen to threaten the global non-proliferation system, and that the situation on the Korean peninsula should return to that of cold war days. The key to solving this problem is in the hands of North Korea. Therefore, I urge North Korea to reverse its decision to withdraw from the NPT, and to fulfil its responsibilities in earnest as a party to the NPT by complying faithfully with the IAEA resolution requesting it to subject its suspected nuclear sites to IAEA inspections. I believe that we should seek to obtain North Korea's reversal through dialogue and persuasion. I am confident that the international community is with us in our efforts in this regard.

The PRESIDENT: I wish to thank Ambassador Park Soo Gil for his statement and for his kind references to me in the Chair. I give the floor to the representative of Bulgaria, Mr. Halatchev.

Mr. HALATCHEV (Bulgaria): Mr. President, on behalf of the Bulgarian delegation I would like to express to you and to other colleagues our gratitude for the kind words addressed to the outgoing President. My delegation wishes you every success in discharging your responsibilities as President of the Conference on Disarmament - we pledge to you our full support.

Let me make a brief statement in connection with the decision of the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to withdraw from the non-proliferation Treaty on nuclear weapons. We share the great concern expressed by other delegations at the decision taken by the Government of the Democratic People,s Republic of Korea to withdraw from the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The Government of the Republic of Bulgaria considers the NPT as a cornerstone of the global non-proliferation regime with respect to nuclear weapons. The wide membership of the NPT is an indication of the great importance that the international community attaches to this instrument. Concerted action to strengthen the non-proliferation regime is currently one of the major avenues of the efforts to eliminate the potential danger to peace and stability posed by a spread of nuclear or other weapons of mass destruction. The strict and unconditional implementation of all provisions of the NPT and of the respective IAEA safeguards agreements concluded under article III of that Treaty is a basic prerequisite for ensuring the viability and the stabilizing role of the non-proliferation regime. Any development that contravenes this collective effort would inevitably produce an extremely negative effect. In this context, the decision of the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to withdraw from the NPT is an unprecedented act representing a serious challenge to the non-proliferation regime and to the international community. This step may have serious implications to not only the security of the region, but also to international peace and security at large. As one of the members of the IAEA Board of Governors, the Republic of Bulgaria reaffirms its full confidence in, and support for, the work of the Agency including its inspection procedure, as well as for the Board of Governors resolution of 25 February 1993 calling on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to fulfil its responsibilities under the NPT and its IAEA safeguards agreement. Bulgaria will continue to help ensure the conditions necessary for the practical implementation of that resolution. We hope that the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will reconsider its decision and continue to be bound by its legal obligations under the NPT.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Bulgaria for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. Are there any further representatives who wish to take the floor at this stage? I see none.

I would now like to turn to some items of business of the Conference. First, I should like to report to the Conference that the consultations held on the appointment of the new Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency in Armaments have concluded successfully. Accordingly, the Group of 21 has nominated the representative of Egypt, Ambassador Zahran, as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee. I informed the coordinators at our meeting yesterday of my intention to formalize this appointment today. Therefore, I now invite the Conference to appoint Ambassador Zahran of Egypt as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency in Armaments.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: May I now extend our congratulations to Ambassador Zahran on this important appointment and wish him all success in the tasks facing him in this capacity? I have been asked by Ambassador Zahran to inform the Conference that he intends to hold a brief organizational meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee tomorrow, Friday at 3 p.m.

May I now turn to our second subject? The secretariat has distributed today the weekly timetable of meetings to be held by the Conference and its subsidiary bodies during the coming week. A revision has been circulated during the meeting to take account of a suggestion of Ambassador Zahran to re-schedule his meeting of the transparency in armaments Ad Hoc Committee. As usual, the timetable is merely indicative and subject to change, if necessary. On this understanding, may we adopt it?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: I should like now to raise another organizational matter. You will recall that, at the opening of the annual session, we agreed that there would be no meetings of the Conference and its subsidiary bodies during the first week of the second part of the session, that is between 10 and 14 May, since the Preparatory Committee for the review conference of the Treaty on the Non-

Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons would meet during this period in New York City. Furthermore, the date allocated for the plenary

(The President)

meeting to be held the following week, Thursday, 20 May, is an official holiday in Geneva and accordingly in the Palais des Nations. This being the case, during consultations with the coordinators we agreed to re-schedule the plenary meeting for that week for Tuesday, 18 May. Thus, the first plenary meeting of the second part of the annual session will be held on that date.

That concludes our work for today and I now intend to adjourn this plenary meeting. The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will be held on Tuesday, 23 March, at 10 a.m.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.

CD/PV.647
23 March 1993

ENGLISH

FINAL RECORD OF THE SIX HUNDRED AND FORTY-SEVENTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Tuesday, 23 March 1993, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. Gerald Shannon (Canada)

GE.93-60472 (E)

The President: I declare open the 647th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

I have on my list of speakers today the representatives of Brazil, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Japan. I now give the floor to the representative of Brazil, Ambassador Amorim.

Mr. AMORIM (Brazil): It is a pleasure for me to address this plenary under your able presidency, the distinguished Ambassador of Canada, my good friend Gerald Shannon. As myself, you have the dubious honour of occupying yourself with every issue in town. I am sure, however, that in your case, unlike mine, your negotiating skills will come as a help to this body and contribute to make true the biblical saying of "transforming swords into ploughshares". So I warmly congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency. You can count on my support and that of my delegation in your endeavours as President of the Conference on Disarmament.

Let me also put on record my appreciation with regard to your predecessor, Mr. Radoslav Deyanov, of Bulgaria, who presided the Conference during a period of particular interest, when two important reports for the future of the CD were presented to the resumed session of the United Nations General Assembly.

My intention today is to refer to the question of "Transparency in armaments" and I note also with satisfaction that even before we got transparent in armaments, we are already transparent in subjects, and we are somehow pre-announcing what we are going to discuss here. I think that is an improvement.

In 1991 the Conference on Disarmament was called upon, by United Nations General Assembly resolution 46/36 L, to address a number of issues related to transparency in armaments. The absence of an ad hoc committee during the 1992 session did not prevent us from dealing with the general aspects of the subject, under the coordination and guidance of Ambassador Mounir Zahran, of Egypt. We reported to the General Assembly about our first discussions, which may not have progressed as fast as we wished, because of the priority accorded last year to the conclusion of the chemical weapons Convention.

We were encouraged to see the early establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on Transparency in Armaments this year and that the attention of member States is rapidly turning to concrete issues, under the able chairmanship of the Ambassador of Egypt. One of the concrete issues the Committee can take up was already referred to in our last plenary by Ambassador Lanús of Argentina. The question was mentioned in paragraph 13 of resolution 46/36 L, which requested the Conference on Disarmament to elaborate practical means to increase openness and transparency in relation to the transfer of high technology with military applications and weapons of mass destruction. We agree with the concepts enunciated by Ambassador Lanús that technology in itself is neutral, that there is a right of access to high technologies which are necessary for socio-economic development and that international transfers in this field have to be conducted under well-defined, multilaterally agreed rules. I note with satisfaction that mention of this important question was made in the report of the CD to the resumed session of the First Committee of the General Assembly.

The view of my Government is that transparency in relation to the transfer of high technology cannot be achieved through unilateral controls. An effort should be made in order to allow a wide participation of countries in the elaboration of rules governing transfers and controls of dual-use technology. Participation in the decision-making process related to the verification regimes established by multilateral rules is also of utmost importance.

Resolution 47/52 L calls upon Member States to provide the requested data on imports and exports of arms to the Secretary-General annually, beginning in 1993. I am pleased to inform that my Government is compiling data and will take the necessary steps to comply with the request before the deadline of 30 April. In this connection I would like to express my Government's support for the proposal made by the United States Ambassador at the plenary session of 4 March. We agree to the commitment proposed by him with regard to the timely provision of information to the United Nations Secretariat, as requested in resolution 47/52 L. We can also support the suggestion of exchange of information among Member States, as an exercise of a voluntary character. All data exchanged have to be properly transmitted to the United Nations Secretariat too, where it will be made available for consultation by Member States, in accordance with resolution 46/36 L.

My Government intends to continue its cooperation with the United Nations Secretariat in providing all relevant information to increase transparency in the area of arms transfers. In July 1992, information related to the Brazilian controls of materials of military application was transmitted to the Secretariat. The Secretariat was also informed that since 1936 formal controls were established in Brazil on production, trade, industrial use, transit, import and export of military and what we now call dual-use material. Information was also provided on the development of national regulations over the years, together with a description of our "General guidelines for the national policy on export of military-use material".

My Government welcomed with appreciation the approval by consensus of the report of governmental experts on the Register of Conventional Arms, whose work was concluded in July 1992, under the able guidance of Ambassador Wagenmakers, of the Netherlands, to whom I want to pay special tribute. Mr. Antonino Lisboa, of Brazil, took an active part in the expert group. We were glad to see that the Secretary-General made full use of the experts' conclusions in presenting his report on the technical procedures and adjustments to the annex of resolution 46/36 L and that the United Nations General Assembly endorsed the recommendations made by the Secretary-General.

In 1993 and 1994 we will face new challenges in assessing the operation of the United Nations Register and considering ways to develop it further. We agree with the Secretary-General that successful development and operation of the Register could in the final analysis provide the United Nations with an effective instrument in preventive diplomacy.

The PRESIDENT: I thank Ambassador Amorim of Brazil for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Ambassador Ri Tcheul.

Mr. RI (Democratic People's Republic of Korea)(translated from French): Mr. President, since I am taking the floor for the first time at the present plenary meeting, allow me to congratulate you on taking up the presidency.

During the past year, major efforts have been made to accelerate disarmament and *détente* throughout the world. The spread of ethnic and religious disputes in various parts of the world, however, is causing great concern in the international community. Under the pretext of dispute settlement, all kinds of additional weapons are being introduced into these areas and intervention by various forces is on the increase. Mass sales of modern weapons, including the latest fighters, to a variety of countries and regions are further heightening tension in regions of potential conflict. The evolution of the present situation shows that there is no change in the power politics and the world strategy in the cold war era, even in the new situation where the structure of the cold war has been dismantled and the very East-West concept has lost its meaning.

Power politics has halted the process of *détente* and worsened tension on the Korean peninsula. Last year, the high-level North-South talks reached an advanced stage. The "Agreement on Reconciliation, Non-aggression and Exchanges and Cooperation between the North and the South" and the "Joint Declaration of the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula", having been agreed upon and put into force, passed to the implementation stage. These agreements of historic scope opened up a broad path to concord, *détente* and reunification. The fact that the United States had barely to take measures for a year, which were conducive to *détente* on the Korean peninsula before North-South rapprochement made historic headway proves that stability and peace on the Korean peninsula depend on the United States. The sudden decision taken last October to resume the "Team Spirit" joint military exercises once again heightened tension. My delegation would like to draw your particular attention to the fact that the Prime Ministers of both the North and the South of Korea agreed at Pyongyang at the end of September to related conventions for the implementation of the agreement and that less than a month later, in other words in October, the resumption of "Team Spirit" was decided upon. Two hundred thousand troops, nuclear weapons and the latest combat equipment of every kind were mobilized in these war manoeuvres. Previously, they used the containment of the Soviet Union as a pretext. But it no longer exists. What is more, the United States and the South Korean authorities had officially announced last year that they were taking measures to end these exercises so as to promote *détente* in the Korean peninsula and progress in the North-South dialogue. It is absolutely unjustifiable to resume the "Team Spirit" which had been broken off, at a time when dialogue and relations between North and South were improving, particularly when they were proclaiming non-aggression and the nuclear inspection was taking place. In such a situation, who dares to say that it was time to resume the "Team Spirit" and that the mobilization of large numbers of troops was not intended to attack solely the People's Democratic Republic of Korea? It should be noted that they constitute the most extensive nuclear exercises in the world at the present time when the cold war is over. They run wholly counter to the ideals and objectives of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, designed to respect territorial integrity and sovereignty and refrain from making use of the nuclear threat.

Dialogue is incompatible with war exercises against the partner across the table. It is well known that in the past, whenever the "Team Spirit" was happening in South Korea, the situation was exacerbated to the utmost, dialogue and contacts were suspended for some time or were in a total stalemate. It was for this very reason that from the beginning of the high-level North-South negotiations we said we were in favour of non-aggression and repeated our request for an end to the "Team Spirit" against us as negotiating partner. Through the resumption of the "Team Spirit" it became apparent that the United States and the South Korean authorities did not want either dialogue or reunification or détente on the Korean peninsula and that they were merely pursuing their strategic aim in order to stifle and crush our Republic. The real American intention was confirmed yet again, and the security of our country once again fell under severe threat. The super-Power has not only forcibly carried out the unjustifiable "Team Spirit" under cover of the so-called nuclear issue in the North, but also got IAEA to adopt an extraordinary resolution which imposes a "special inspection" on us, thus creating a dangerous situation which jeopardizes the sovereignty of our Republic.

What is the true nature of the nuclear threat on the Korean peninsula? The nuclear weapons that the United States had begun to deploy in 1957 in South Korea numbered about 1,000 in the 1970s, and they have been constantly updated and strengthened. Whether or not to remove the nuclear threat is for our nation a question of life or death. Our accession to the NPT was also designed first and foremost to promote the withdrawal of nuclear weapons from South Korea and the elimination of the nuclear menace. As soon as we acceded to the NPT, my Government redoubled its efforts to bring about the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. In June 1986, it put forward specific proposals for the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone of peace. However, the United States and South Korea stubbornly opposed this, a historical fact noted in the records of the fourth conference of parties held to review the NPT. Although the announcement in 1991 of the withdrawal of tactical nuclear weapons from South Korea gave rise to a number of doubts, we perceived it as a sign favourable to détente on the Korean peninsula.

After a lengthy period of projects and refusals, the North and the South of Korea finally agreed on the "Joint Declaration of the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula", a document of historic importance. In accordance with the aforementioned Declaration, they set up a Joint Nuclear Control Commission that held 14 sessions up to last January. There was some progress, but also divergences of view. The nub of the difference related to the definition of the sites for inspection and the inspection arrangements, with our side wanting to proceed to a general inspection on the American bases and nuclear weapons in South Korea and the latter advocating "mutual inspection on the same number of sites". The work of the Joint North-South Nuclear Control Commission shows that the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Korea is impossible as long as there is no fundamental change in the nuclear policy of the super-Power vis-à-vis the Korean peninsula.

In April last year my Government concluded the safeguards agreement and, from May to February this year, accepted ad hoc IAEA inspections on six occasions. We made every sincere effort at cooperation so that the Agency inspection could be carried out successfully. During the inspection that was conducted without a hitch, it was confirmed that our nuclear activities have been carried out for peaceful purposes. But at the end of last year, IAEA suddenly began to exert pressure on us with two problems. It claimed that there was an "inconsistency in principle" and that it wanted to inspect two "military sites". There is in fact no "inconsistency in principle" between our country and the Agency. There is no disagreement between our initial report and the results of the Agency inspection, but a difference in the method used for measurement, interpretation and evaluation between our facility operators and the team of inspectors.

During the sixth ad hoc inspection at the beginning of February, the inspectors recognized the cause of this difference and thus threw further light on this question, and agreement was reached for the results of the inspection carried out by the Agency to be re-examined so that discussions could continue on this topic during the next inspection. It is more than obvious that this cannot be a pretext for a forced inspection, but means that consultations must continue. This is why some Agency officials have obstructed the normal running of the inspection and negotiations to settle the difference and have been quick to take a decision on the special inspection, standing resolutely by their inspection results. The sixth team of inspectors was due to arrive in Vienna on 8 February and again calculate the difference, so as to communicate it to us. But on 9 February, the day after his team arrived, the Director General proposed a "special inspection", even before the new calculation had been carried out. In this way the "promise" to inform us of the outcome of the new calculation was replaced by the resolution on a "special inspection". That is why the way was barred to resolving the problem by negotiations. Even in this situation, we continued our efforts to resolve the issue. Our Minister of Atomic Energy came to Vienna with facility operators for talks to throw light on the difference on 20 and 21 February just before the session of the Board of Governors.

As for the allegations made by some people in the Agency, we again gave scientific and technical explanations based on real evidence. None the less, although our partners recognized their error of principle in their measurements and could give no response to our argument, they ended up by torpedoing the negotiations while going so far as to say that they had not seen our brief which they had already seen during their inspection. It is because the United States' need to obtain, before 8 March, the starting date of the "Team Spirit", the decision on the special inspection, so as to justify the resumption of these exercises, was closely linked to the interests of the Agency, which, to the detriment of a small country, in other words, our own, is seeking to curry favour with the United States (which was criticizing IAEA by describing its nuclear inspection as lacking credibility). In fact, the decision of the Board of Governors on 25 February was sufficient to allow the resumption of the "Team Spirit" exercises, which the international community criticized for lacking clear justification.

As for the two military sites, these are conventional military bases that have nothing to do with the nuclear issue. They are not therefore to be inspected and we are under no obligation to open them. There is no scientific or legal relationship between the "inconsistency" and the two military sites. At present the United States and some individuals in the IAEA secretariat, by describing these two military sites as nuclear facilities, are spreading rumours to the effect that the two sites are nuclear facilities and that we are refusing to open them to inspection. We have never refused a request from officials of the Agency to visit the nuclear sites. But the problem lies in the military sites, which are not nuclear facilities, and which the Agency wishes to inspect so as to confirm a hypothesis that has been based on falsified information provided by third countries, among them a country that is belligerent towards us. It is with a very dangerous objective that the United States and some individuals in the Agency secretariat have most carefully set up this question of the two military sites.

On 23 July last year, the United States invited the Director General of the Agency to a joint hearing in the House of Representatives so as to find out about our nuclear programme. At the same time, they asked him to impose upon us a "special inspection" and a "challenge inspection". In September 1992, two months later, the Director General of the agency suddenly asked us to show, in the context of a visit, the "two sites", which have nothing to do with our nuclear activities, to the inspectors that had come to our country for their third ad hoc inspection. We showed them these, respecting his first proposal, although this request to allow them to visit any site and any facility which are not the subject of the guarantees runs counter to the spirit of the convention. The inspectors went through them with inspection equipment, like a police raid on the home of a criminal. When, two days later, they again asked to be shown them once more, "so that other people in the Agency should not find it necessary to visit them again", we also authorized the visits. Only then did we get the disagreeable impression, on noting that some individuals in IAEA were carrying out a second-rate operation, that under cover of the visit, the "challenge inspection" had already happened and that the sovereignty of our country had been violated. But they had to acknowledge that these conventional military sites had nothing to do with nuclear activities. In relation to the fact that some individuals in the Agency were taking advantage of our good will, we sent the Director General an official letter stating that henceforward, no visit or inspection of this kind would be authorized without proper grounds and that this was the first and last chance. Everything that has happened since then has confirmed that the Agency was allowing itself to be manipulated by a third party.

On 22 December last year the Director General once again suggested a visit to a military site that had already been visited, and another military site. During negotiations that the IAEA consultation delegation held with us from 20 to 22 January in Pyongyang, it did not disguise the need for its inspection on "two sites" on the basis of information supplied by the super-Power, and sought to threaten us with pressures while emphasizing the "urgency" and "importance" of this inspection. Today it is clear that the "importance" and "urgency" meant political pressure by the Board of Governors' decision of 25 February and the military threat by the "Team Spirit" that were to begin on 8 March.

The use of information provided by third countries in nuclear inspection is not set forth in the safeguards agreement, the Statute of IAEA or other documents adopted by the Board of Governors, and in particular it was rejected by many members during the December 1991 session of the Board of Governors. If, in the inspection, information is used that has been supplied by third countries, the specific nature of the prevailing system of Agency inspections will change, and the structure and content of the standard safeguards agreement, which constitutes its legal basis, will also have to change completely.

If our country accepted the improper request for inspection by IAEA over conventional military bases, based on information invented by the super-Power, this would mean legitimizing the act of espionage by the United States which is the belligerent adversary of our country and marking the start of the complete opening of all our military bases. In this case, this will create a serious precedent such that my country today, other non-nuclear countries tomorrow, will fall victim to it. It goes without saying that the nuclear inspections by IAEA in our country to date have been carried out under the manipulation of a third party and not in accordance with the Agency's Statute or the safeguards agreement. Contrary to the safeguards agreement, the Agency has systematically provided the United States and South Korea with the results of the inspections with regard to my country. Ultimately, this shows that those who are hostile to us have made use of our sincerity for the inspection in order to undermine the interior of the country and jeopardize our sovereignty and dignity.

My Government's accession to the NPT and the entry into force of the safeguards agreement were designed to remove the nuclear threat against us, and not to place its sovereignty and security at the mercy of anyone. Indeed, it was not in order to allow ourselves to be intimidated by nuclear weapons nor by sanctions or pressures from the United States or any associated forces. All these facts show that the greater our efforts to bring about détente and national union and thus promote the maintenance of peace and security in Asia and the rest of the world, and the more our peaceful nuclear policy is confirmed through nuclear inspections, the more our Republic has to face a greater danger. There is no country or people which will remain impassive in the face of an obvious strategic attempt to stifle and crush a country by force of arms and political pressure and the seriousness of the situation deriving from this, in which the fate of the nation is threatened. The Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was forced to take a step to withdraw from the NPT so as to defend its supreme interests.

The United States and some individuals in IAEA who are tagging along behind it are wholly responsible for having made us unable to continue to meet our obligations under the NPT. The end of the "Team Spirit" military exercises for this year does not weaken the nuclear, military and political threat hanging over us, but on the contrary, it is growing more than ever in a new form. At present, attempts are proving increasingly open to bring our matter to the United Nations Security Council, forcing us to reverse our decision to withdraw from the NPT, so as to bring new pressure and heavier threats to bear on us. If the United States, which has directly used force to ruin our Republic and has not let up the pressure, the blockade and the sanctions for a single moment, continues to pursue nothing but power politics in the future, the hostile relations between the DPRK and the United States will by no means improve. Today, to use "isolation" or a "sanction" to intimidate our people, which considers dignity and independence as something vital, is a path without knowing exactly our people. If the United States and their satellites apply ever greater threats against the sovereignty of our Republic and the security of the nation, we will be placed in a position where we cannot but take appropriate measures in response.

It was the United States that first produced nuclear weapons to bring about the nuclear arms race, to use them to sow nuclear horror around the world, and that seeks to deploy them even into the universe. It is also the United States that none the less escapes the called-for condemnation. The international community must never allow a single super-Power the privilege which will allow it to produce, upgrade, sell or deploy on foreign soil weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons, chemical weapons and inter-continental ballistic missiles. All this constitutes the source of all the evil in our world. There is a moral code in the international community characterized by justice and impartiality. It is absolutely not right or equitable to remain silent about the fact that the super-Power and some individuals in IAEA have secured the adoption of an unjust unprecedented resolution, and to call into question only legitimate counter-measures that a small country without nuclear weapons has rightly taken to safeguard its right to exist.

The policy of the Government of our Republic involving the use of nuclear power for peaceful purposes is unchanging. In the future too the Government and people of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will make every effort to carry through their proposals for denuclearization and disarmament in the Korean peninsula and for the reunification of the country, the guarantee of lasting peace and security.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Ambassador of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for his statement and for his compliments to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of Japan, Ambassador Tanaka.

Mr. TANAKA (Japan): Mr. President, as this is the first time that my delegation takes the floor in the plenary meeting under your presidency, let me, at the outset, join the delegations which have already taken the floor in congratulating you on the assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament and assuring you of our full cooperation.

Japan had already joined the other members of the Western Group in the statement made on 18 March by the group coordinator, Ambassador Wagenmakers of the Netherlands. Today I have taken the floor to put on record a concern of Japan, a country situated in the close vicinity of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, with the recent development in our region. The announcement of 12 March by the DPRK about its withdrawal from the NPT constitutes a challenge to the nuclear non-proliferation regime itself and brings about a grave situation as was stated by many delegations at the last plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament on 18 March. The international community has continuously been making concerted efforts to strengthen the regime of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. The action recently taken by the DPRK fundamentally goes counter to such international endeavours. Therefore, Japan profoundly deplores the DPRK's decision.

The DPRK accuses in its announcement the secretariat of IAEA. The Board of Governors of IAEA, however, adopted by consensus on 18 March a resolution which supports the Director General and the secretariat of IAEA. Thus no country shared the view expressed by the DPRK. The DPRK has not cleared the doubt about its nuclear ambitions. With respect to the special inspection, it was natural that the secretariat of IAEA took the relevant measures, in view of the significant inconsistencies between the information provided by the DPRK and the findings by IAEA, which had become apparent as a result of the past six ad hoc inspections.

The DPRK's unilateral action has changed the situation in the Korean peninsula, which may seriously affect the peace and security of Japan. And Japan is deeply concerned about this. In collaboration with the United Nations Security Council, IAEA and such countries concerned as the United States of America and the Republic of Korea, Japan intends to continue to urge the DPRK to reverse its decision of withdrawal from the NPT and thus to return to the international community so that it will take part in the international concerted efforts for the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. We should like to remind the DPRK that, as the country remains a State party to the NPT until its withdrawal becomes effective, it shall remain under the obligations of the NPT as well as those of the safeguards agreement with IAEA.

The PRESIDENT: I wish to thank Ambassador Tanaka for his statement and for his kind words expressed to the Chair. That concludes my list of speakers for today. The representative of the United States of America, Ambassador Ledogar, has asked for the floor.

Mr. LEDOGAR (United States of America): The United States regrets to note the many outright distortions and misstatements of fact in today's address by the representative of the DPRK. The true facts are well known and are a matter of record. What we heard today from the representative of the DPRK, when boiled down to its essentials, simply says that rather than abide by its commitments and international obligations, rather than open Yongbyon and the other facility to the required international inspection, the DPRK would prefer to abrogate the Treaty and walk away from it, throwing a bunch of shabby distortions at us as an excuse. I think that the intelligence of the representatives here and of their authorities has been insulted.

Mr. ERRERA (France) (translated from French): I have already had occasion last week to express my views as a national representative on the announcement by the authorities of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of its withdrawal from the non-proliferation treaty. My country's position is also contained in the statement made by the Danish presidency of the European Community on behalf of the 12 member States, and also in the statement read in this room last week by the Ambassador of the Netherlands on behalf of the Western Group. Consequently it was not my intention to revert to this subject. However, I cannot allow to go unanswered the words which were just spoken by the representative of North Korea. Much could be said about many points; I will address only one. It is not acceptable to my delegation to say or imply that the present situation is due to one super-Power and a few individuals in the International Atomic Energy Agency. We have already heard similar arguments in the recent past from another State in another region of the world, we know what they are worth, as well as why they are being made. It is not a single country, even a super-Power, that is at the origin of the decision of IAEA, which is gravely concerned at the situation created by North Korea. It is the international community, represented in this case by the Board of Governors of IAEA, which on 25 February last, after having heard a more than convincing report from its Director General, requested North Korea to respect its international commitments by allowing Agency inspection teams -international, neutral teams - to visit two problematical sites. That decision, I hardly need recall, was adopted by consensus by the Board of Governors. I hardly need recall either that the North Korean authorities were given one month to fulfil their obligations. What is not acceptable, is to question the impartiality, the competence, the status of the International Atomic Energy Agency. To question that is to deny the efforts of the international community to base the security of us all on increasing use of multilateral institutions in which the interests of all are represented and reflected, increasing use of multilateral institutions particularly through greater openness to international verification, which is the guarantee of security for all. In other words, what we have here is an attempt to question the will of the overwhelming majority of States to combat proliferation. This is a step backwards which is extremely disquieting. That is what I wished to say. I will simply add two points. The first point which I mentioned last week and which was mentioned by all the speakers on this matter: during the 90 days following notification by North Korea of its withdrawal from the NPT, that country remains bound by its obligations under the Treaty, including fulfilment of obligations deriving from the safeguards agreement with IAEA. Second point, which I also mentioned last week: any infringement of the regime for the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons is a blow against the efforts to achieve nuclear disarmament for which the international community is calling.

Mr. GEHR (Austria) (translated from French): Before entering into the substance of the matter, I would not like to neglect to congratulate you, Sir, on behalf of the Austrian delegation, on your election as President, since we have not had an opportunity to do so previously.

We listened with great attention to the statement by Ambassador Ri Tcheul of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. We will of course transmit the text to the competent authorities in our capital. Nevertheless, I think this is a good moment in this Conference to recall Austria's position. In February 1992, in this room, at a plenary session, my country welcomed the "Joint Declaration of the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula". At that time we expressed our hope that this declaration would lead to a firm commitment by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the NPT. However, that country's intention to withdraw from the Treaty is in our view dangerous and disquieting, for several reasons, particularly for the stability of the Korean peninsula. Therefore, we strongly urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to respect the commitments which it has entered into towards IAEA and thereby the entire international community. In addition, instead of withdrawing from the Treaty, we urge that country to accept the legitimate decisions of IAEA with regard to it.

The PRESIDENT: I wish to thank the representative of Austria for his statement and for his kind words addressed to the Chair. Are there any further delegations who wish to take the floor? I recognize the delegate of the Republic of Korea.

Mr. MOON (Republic of Korea): The position of my delegation was clearly stated at the 646th plenary meeting last week. We pointed out that the North Korean decision to abandon the NPT was a serious challenge to the global non-proliferation system and a threat to regional and global peace and security. We also stressed that the justifications offered by the North Korean authorities for North Korea's act, including the one made by the distinguished Ambassador of the DPRK was and is nothing but a self-serving excuse drawn from a distortion of the actual facts. Today, we note that the international community is united in its disapproval of the North Korean move. This is clear not only in the CD but also in other international forums, including IAEA. The Board of Governors meeting of IAEA held on 18 March adopted a resolution that supports the efforts of the IAEA secretariat to implement the safeguards agreement with the DPRK in an impartial and objective manner and requests the Director General of the IAEA secretariat to report on the response of the DPRK to the special inspection of its suspected facilities at a meeting to be held on 31 March. In this regard I would like to once again urge North Korea to reverse its decision. I sincerely hope that North Korea will act responsibly and fulfil the expectations of the international community by complying faithfully with the IAEA resolution.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of North Korea for his statement. Are there any further statements to be made? Are there any other delegations who wish to take the floor? I recognize the delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Before you take the floor, Sir, and to other delegations as well, I wish to recall that delegations are obviously entitled to express their views on certain issues and my duty as President is to provide you with the chance to do so. It is also clear, however, that once the opportunity has been given, the President shall proceed with the normal business of the Conference. It is also my responsibility to prevent exchanges of views around a particular subject from becoming a political confrontation, which this Conference should not be experiencing as its terms of reference really are of a negotiating character. Several delegations which intervened today also did so at the last plenary and I am not anxious to prolong the debate, so I would encourage our colleague, the Ambassador of the DPRK, to make his statement and keep it brief because he has already given a very extensive outlay of his country's situation. You have the floor.

Mr. RI (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) (translated from French): Mr. President, thank you for giving me the floor once again. In view of the fact that certain distinguished representatives have expressed their concern at the present situation which has arisen because of one super-Power and certain individuals in IAEA, I have many things to explain to them but I will respect the proposal of the Chair. I would like to avoid confrontation with other delegations and I will desist. I will have other opportunities to explain my position.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Ambassador of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for his statement. This concludes our work for today, unless others wish to take the floor.

The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will be held on Thursday 25 March, at 10 a.m.

The meeting rose at 11.20 a.m.